Woman as enemy of the nation-state: citizenship, transgression and legacy in *Maps* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*

By

Noélle Koeries

in partial fulfilment of a Master's Degree
in the Department of English
University of Cape Town
March 2017

It is learning how to take our differences and make them strengths. For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change.

- Audre Lorde (1984)

A map is only one story. It is not the most important story. The most important story is the one a people tell about themselves.

- Jamila Osman (2017)

Dedication

For Ella-Mae: *They will never know*.

Notes of appreciation

Christopher Ouma, my super supervisor, kept me grounded and productive. He opened the space for me to do this my way, and at my pace. My copy editor, Ute Kuhlmann, is patience, has a sharp eye and an amazing turnover time. The flaws and errors are mine.

It took a village to get me here[1]: Alexandrina Deschamps, Barbara Boswell, Bongani Koni, Daniela Franca Joffe, Dela Gwala, Harry Garuba, Isa Mkoko, Jill Patel, Khwezi Mkhize, Kiran Asher, Louise Green, Maria Ximena Abello Hurtado, Meg Samuelson, Pumla Gqola, Roshila Nair, Sarah Smit, Shihaam Peplow, Tina Steiner, and Victoria Collis-Buthelezi. I've been privileged to be at the receiving end of your generosity and kindness.

I have found clarity, home and the gift of presence in Vanessa OM, Melanie Burke and Beulah Thumbadoo. My gratitude runs deep.

ThunderCloud, Khairoonisa Fofklonker, and Ukhona Mdlandu; I am appreciative for all the weight you carried in this process.

Then there are my sisters: Karis-Simone Bailey Saim, Carla Marie Bagarette, Jade Danielle Hartogh and Bianca Maria Philander. I could choose differently, but I couldn't choose better.

My family members never really know what I was up to, but they are supportive and encouraging.

To my parents, through their presence and absence. I acknowledge your part in this.

[1] I received the Innovation Masters Scholarship from the National Research Fund, administered by UCT.

Contents

Abstract

This thesis brings to the fore two non-focalising characters, Misra of *Maps* by Nuruddin Farah and Kainene of *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. These transgressive characters are placed at the centre of their respective narratives. The aim is to demonstrate the way they transgress conventional political, social, national and gendered boundaries. This transgression creates the space for an alternative citizenship to emerge. The type of citizenship that is multi-faceted and embraces the complexity and nuances of contested borders. These transgressions are read as legacy especially because neither Misra nor Kainene bring to fruition the potentialities and possibilities of their subversive natures. However, both novels present alternatives that reach beyond the closing of the narratives. Ultimately, this thesis questions the purpose of writing transgressive woman characters out of the official narrative.

Key words: African Feminisms, Citizenship, Textual violence.

Introduction: Forging the path between transgression and legacy

When you look at the role of women as markers of collective boundaries and differences and also as participants in national, political and economic struggles we often find a contradiction – women are constituted through the state but are also often actively engaged in countering state processes.

– Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis 11

The selected novels for this thesis, *Maps* by Nuruddin Farah and *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, have notable similarity, marked difference as well as a sense of continuity. The novels are written twenty years apart and deal with civil wars – the Ogaden War and the Biafra War – in different countries, Somalia and Nigeria respectively, by authors writing from the diaspora, creating an element of temporal and spatial distinction. These aspects enrich the thesis and create a thought-provoking comparison.

Farah was ahead of his time, though still working out what a modern African society would look like, particularly in terms of gendered roles. In an interview with Kwame Anthony Appiah describes Farah as "a feminist writer in a part of the world where that's almost unknown among male writers". Nana Wilson-Tagoe (184) lists Farah's novels as "women-centred" alongside those of Emecheta, Dangaremba and Vera. In turn, Adichie has self-identified as a feminist writer and continues the tradition writers who focus on the influence of the transgressive African woman within civil wars and border disputes.

The wars contest nation-state borders and challenge the identities forged during this period. Both novels have young boys who are either embroiled in or encouraged to join nationalist efforts. Both boys are educated and in different ways begin writing the nation (through literature and cartography). And as these young men write the nation, Misra and Kainene counter the nationalist narrative as well as the idea of motherhood. This counter positioning invites interesting narrative techniques and choices.

The selection of texts for this thesis is intentional. While there are a number of novelists who write on similar themes, the primary texts were selected because there are clearly constructed dissident bodies, a nuanced comparison opportunity is created. This thesis offers a way to

read and compare other texts in a similar way; ideally, it should call to mind the many non-focal characters often overlooked in favour of the main character/s.

Farah's body of work lends itself to intense study, particularly since his work focuses on themes like nation and gender. *Maps* is the first book in the *Blood in the Sun* trilogy (*Gifts* and *Secrets* are the novels that follow). While there are a number of characters that reappear in Farah's novels, Misra's character in *Maps* presents a particular curious dilemma for questions of nation and gender. The composition of her character, the way she is represented, and her physicality along with her physical movements are compelling, especially against the backdrop of the Ogaden War. Similarly, in *Half of a Yellow Sun* Adichie pointedly explores the themes of nation and gender against the backdrop of the Biafra War. The synergy between the novels, the common themes and divergent outcomes drives this thesis.

Misra, an Ethiopian, fosters a Somali orphan, Askar, and lives in Kallafo, an area Ethiopia and Somalia claim as their own. She is divorced and has lost her young child. She concurrently has secret sexual engagements with the local cleric and one of the village's wealthier men. As an unmarried pregnant woman, and uncertain of paternity, she elects to have an abortion. Throughout these situations, Misra mothers Askar with great care and attention. Later in the novel she is implicated in an act of treason. The fact that Misra is not Somali is articulated throughout the novel and in part drives its conflict and tension. Thus the issue of citizenship plays a key role in Misra's identity and throughout the novel.

In *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Kainene, an Igbo Nigerian, has a white British partner. Their potential offspring would not be the sought-after essentialised Nigerian, instead they would be mark by the fact that they have a white British father. Their existence would complicate the idea of a unified Nigerian citizenship and identity. The fact that Kainene is Igbo further impacts the position she holds within Nigeria. She is a born member of the ethnic group who wants to secede from Nigeria. Added to this, during the Biafra War, she runs a refugee camp for the Igbo people. Kainene is consequently entangled in nation-state conflicts in the novel.

Textual explorations

This thesis centres the transgressive figures of Misra and Kainene. It demonstrates the way these characters transgress political, social, national and gendered boundaries. This transgression is then read as a way to create an alternative citizenship. The type of citizenship that is multi-faceted and embraces the complexity and nuances of contested borders. Moreover, these transgressions are read as legacy. Ultimately, this thesis questions why transgressive woman characters are written out of the official narrative.

In *Maps* Misra's character is a way for Farah to vigorously question, challenge and oppose the notion that Somali identity is a fixed. Similarly, Adichie uses Kainene to propose an alternative form of citizenship. The characters, to different degrees, present the reader with questions of identity, the nation-state, and womanhood and through this bring into consciousness the possibility of a different world. The novels, within their specific contexts, illustrate ways in which gender boundaries can be transgressed. In terms of gendered dynamics within the nation-state where the masculine protects the motherland, this is a powerful articulation. At the same time, Farah and Adichie show these characters to be part of their different communities despite their characters defying normative gender stereotypes. Misra and Kainene are, then, read as non-essentialised representations of African womanhood.

They also represent non-conformity within communities (and nation-states) that are pushing for a unified identity. This non-conformity dominates their narrative and it is this aspect that I home in on. The ways in which Misra and Kainene enact womanhood permeates the pages of the novels and presents an another form of citizenship. In this thesis, I consider their non-conformity and transgression as inseparable from their legacy.

A key part of their transgression (and legacy) is how their bodies are viewed and treated in different spaces within the nation-state (as well as outside its "borders"). As the authors challenge the idea of the nation-state, they bring into question the fraught nature of protecting contested borders, as well as highlight the way bodies are constructed, constrained and controlled within the nation-state. The nation-state itself becomes a point of contestation. Misra's position within her community challenges fixed ideas of kinship. Her role as mother to Askar and other within the Kallafo community are not readily reconcilable in the narrative yet they co-exist. Misra's presence challenges the idea of a nation-state, within the context of

the civil wars. Kainene adds a distinct separation of nation and state. She is born Igbo-Nigerian and disappears at the line between the desired Republic of Biafran and the official Federal Republic of Nigerian War attempts to create a state that reflects the Igbo nation. In part, these characters show up the futility of border wars by way of subverting the premises on which they are based such as a unified identity and cohesive state parameters. When both characters' disappearance is marked by the hope they will reappear (their deaths seem unimaginable within the narrative). In this sense, their presence remains etched on the paper; though other narratives may be drawn over them, their absence pervades the closing pages of the novel.

This thesis explores how non-conformity and transgression become legacy. I read the novels as social and political commentary on the essentialised construction of African womanhood. The authors also sketch alternative realities and the characters' ideologies are embedded in the closing pages; this is how non-conformity and transgression becomes legacy. Still, these characters are physically removed from the narrative and part of this thesis is to understand why this happens. How is it that Misra and Kainene are permitted to impact the consciousness of the characters that remain (particularly those that represent the emerging national consciousness) yet they cannot live as the civil wars end, and the nation-state is reconfigured?

The issue of the body links closely to issues that arise from contested nation-state boundaries: citizenship, and identity. In the case of women, motherhood and mothering are interwoven. It seems appropriate that the concept of the nation-state grounds the discussion. In basic terms, the nation-state exists as an independent state where its citizens are homogeneous particularly in terms of cultural, language, history and descent. Civil wars that are also border wars suggest that the nation-state is in dispute. Within this circumstance, matters such as citizenship and identity become entangled and are questioned.

Continuing on the role of the body and how women physically birth the nation, the way Kainene and Misra "mother" challenges a unified national identity. As women, their bodies are deemed "unAfrican" and this notion extends to a point where, at different stages in each novel, these characters are stripped of their womanhood. Misra's corpse ends up in the sexless ward and Kainene's parents equate her to two sons. In these instances, their

physicality is problematic and challenges the essentialised idea of African womanhood. But, their transgression runs deeper.

Scholarly engagement with primary texts

The scholarly work on Farah's novels has been extensive. The overarching trend has focused on the ways the characters' gender and sexuality intersect with the construction of an official narrative. However, little scholarly work has been done specifically arguing for Misra as a Somali citizen as this thesis does.

The body of work produced by Derek Wright and Fiona Moolla are most notable, and of particular relevance to this thesis. In the early nineties, Wright's work dealt with how Farah represents and reimagines the nation through the child-parent relationship. However, this child-parent relationship is complex as Askar has many parenting figures in the novel though Misra is the dominant parenting influence. Wright argues that Farah uses these complexities to highlight the nuances of Somalia and its relationships to its neighbouring states. He also looks at the ways that gender and sexuality shape the nation and its narrative. For the purpose of this paper, his analysis is useful as an entry point to discuss Misra.

Moolla's scholarship while extensive is not used as comprehensively as Wright's because the focus is on Askar. The primary and major contribution Moolla's work adds to this thesis is that she argues for Misra as the heroine of *Maps*. This builds on the work done by Michelle L. Brown, Francesca Kazan and Hilarie Kelley where they re-evaluate and give weight to Misra's role in the novel. Much like in Wright's work, gender, sexuality and nation are key themes explored, however, their view is through a feminist lens. This is not to say that Wright's work is not feminist, but to note that Brown, Kazan, and Kelley's work are overtly feminist.

Jacqueline Bardolph ("Dreams") deals with how identity is made through dreams and nationality. She explores how national identity is a construction and that civil wars are waged in an attempt to make that dream a reality. In this discussion, the concept of nation is crucial. Benedict Anderson (6) provides a starting point for defining nation as "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign". Partha Chatterjee (5) offers strong critique of Anderson's "imagined community" specifically because it is based on the European and the Americas' model of the nation. The engagement is rich, however, in

this instance Emmanuel Yewah offers a reading that I consider more suitable for use in this thesis,

> [T]he nation… must be seen in its complexity as… a contested construct… it is meant to distinguish it from *community*, a term that, even when imagined, conjures up the idea of the nation as an artificially made structure and, therefore, as something that could be taken apart and reconstructed. (46, 48, italics in original)

Francis Ngaboh-Smart reads *Maps* as Farah questioning the value and relevance of identity through nationalism, particularly in present day Somalia. I use this idea to explore the difficulty Misra's character presents for national identity, especially in relation to Askar as a Somali national. This reading is used to draw attention to the problems around using colonial borders to establish a liberated nation. In all these critiques, the issue of mapping remains central. The fragmented identity of Misra, and contested space of Kallafo directly complicate how the undefined (and unrepresentable) is shown on a map. These critiques allow me to delve into how the marginalised character is represented in a contested space.

The critique of *Half of a Yellow Sun* tends to focus on how the domestic space represents the national state of affairs. Aghogho Akpome argues that Adichie privileges the individual above group identity, and that the nation is culturally determined. Furthermore, Akpome claims that *Half of a Yellow Sun* is part of an ongoing contestation regarding post-independence identity, history and politics. The latter point is aligned to my argument. Adichie presents the complexity and nuances within what is perceived as a homogeneous community. At the same time, however, Daria Tunca ("Other Half") states that Adichie's narrative style inclines the reader to certain sympathies, and interpretations. This brings into question the author's intention and whether the novel's narrative should be contested. Of course, this thesis favours a close reading of the novel and theorises in a way, which allows for a critical evaluation of the "sympathies" the author attempts to evoke.

The New Violent Cartography: Geo-Analysis after the Aesthetic Turn by Samson Opondo and Michael J. Shapiro frames the discussion around the cartographies of violence; particularly useful are the chapters that cover *Maps* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*. In the introduction, Opondo and Shapiro provide an understanding of maps as spatial imaginaries and suggest that bodies disrupt mapped spaces. In the chapter covering *Maps* (which is discussed alongside *Heart of*

Darkness), West-Pavlov explores the role of maps in the nation-state and how they serve to create wars and incite ethnic violence. He further makes critical points about the complexity of Misra's character and her opposition to maps as truth, which is an extension of the argument Opondo and Shapiro make. My position is that while maps may represent space, they cannot denote truth as the lived experience of that space often contradicts what the map represents as evidenced in the respective novels.

Ouma's article makes an important shift, he argues *Half of a Yellow Sun* "takes into account the elite consciousness and anxieties that dominate official historical discourse and the feminist consciousness that presents a counter-discourse to a patriarchal one" (35). He reads the map as the nation-state's attempt to (re)produce stable meaning, histories and identities. Although Ouma writes about *Half of a Yellow Sun*, the construction of representation and truth in *Maps* comes to mind, particularly when questioning whether Misra stands in opposition to maps as truth. These articles are in dialogue and create a scholarly framework that allows me to unpack the function of maps and narrative geographies.

Thesis parameters and intrusions

The thesis focuses on points of tension and contradictions within the novels and suggests a nuanced reading of contested narratives. It peels away the different layers of the novels, and illustrates how the authors have imagined alternative literary cartographies. However, to deal with the various theories and critical frameworks requires a more detailed and focused approach, particularly since the novels speak to somewhat different issues, hence each chapter is dedicated to a novel; each character is read through the national, gendered, physical, social, and political spaces they occupy. This analysis is used to show these characters' transgression and what it means for the way woman characters are portrayed within contested liberation narratives.

In terms of narrative devices, this thesis maps its line of query onto and through non-focalising characters. From the outset, they are portrayed as strong yet problematic figures. I read this positioning within the narrative as part of the reason they cannot be fully contained in the text. By the end of the novels, Misra is dead and Kainene has disappeared, yet reference is made to them in the closing pages; what does this mean for their stories? On an ideological front, the burning question is: is the birth of the nation-state in opposition to women's liberation? And what about these characters complicates and/or troubles the nation-

state narrative? Why is a complete removal from the text needed for the border conflict to be "resolved"?

This leads to the question of citizenship. In the novels, official borders are in dispute, and citizenship is unstable. Yet, there are clear minorities and what seems to be a well-defined understanding of what the official borders should be (physically, culturally, politically and socially). It is in this tension where Misra and Kainene are written out and where the legacy of their transgression plays out.

In reference to Misra and Kainene being physically being written out of the novels, it is pertinent to discuss the concept of narrative geographies where historical spaces act as a narrative medium. Another research concern relates to space: who occupies it, how it is occupied and why it is occupied? One pressing consideration is the final geographical location Misra and Kainene occupy. Misra is thrown into the ocean (yet ends up in the sexless ward before being buried in the state capital), and Kainene is lost behind enemy lines. What significance, if any, do these spaces hold, particularly with the understanding that borders and the ocean are gendered spaces?

Theoretically speaking: Defining scope and establishing boundaries

The novels allow for rich application of theories and each novel has an extensive critical body of work dedicated to it. The primary themes I work with are gender, nation, and mapping. The theoretical frameworks around these themes provide a strong starting point, however, I extend and develop some points to support sections of my research that are not readily addressed within these frameworks. This thesis is at its core based on African Feminism. As Desiree Lewis (6) suggests we are called to "explore aspects of identity that are always incomplete, connected and changing". As this thesis shows,

> [f]ar from any straightforward dualism between an official (policed and inscribed) African femininity and an oppositional feminist consciousness, African women constantly struggle both within and against their official inscription. (Lewis 7)

In terms of gender and nation, Susan Andrade's book, *The Nation Writ Small: African Fictions and Feminisms, 1958-1988*, shapes my ideas around national discourse and feminist theories. The book specifically focuses on fiction written about and around independence.

This is complemented by Meg Samuelson's, *Remembering the Nation, Dismembering Women? Stories of the Southern Africa Transition*. Samuelson discusses national identity, citizenship, and the erasure of women from the liberation movement narrative. Samuelson fuses how women are written out historically and in literature, and focuses on what gets lost in a national transition. This nexus is critical to understanding the implications on the nation-state when dissident bodies are written out of the narrative. I argue that part of what fiction does is to rewrite and question what is considered historical truth. In other ways it also shows up the injustices. And in the instances of *Maps* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*, alternative realities are proposed to the reader.

Nira Yuval-Davis has produced a large body of work around women, citizenship and the nation. She raises key concerns around the role of women in making the nation-state, particularly their role in (re)producing ethnic collectives. She is clear about the complexity of womanhood, and speaks against reductionism. This is critical as both novels represent women from different ethnic, social, and cultural backgrounds. It is important to read their characters from within their specific context. Of particular interest are her books *Woman-Nation-State* (co-authored with Floya Anthias), and *Gender and Nation*. These specifically speak to gendered nation-making as well as citizenship where Yuval-Davis states that nation-states are political and territorial. While it may seem obvious, the novels bring into question the notion that nation-states are natural and Yuval-Davis is methodical in debunking this notion.

The discussion around gender and the nation opens the conversation to the complexities of mapping which is handled on two fronts. Graham Huggan's article "Decolonizing the Map: Postcolonialism, Poststructuralism and the Cartographic Connection" and Harry Garuba's article "Mapping the Land/Body/Subject: Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies in African Narrative" allow the thesis to establish the theory around mapping, decolonisation, and make clear the premise that mapping is a form of violence.

The key point Huggan raises is that cartography had a clear colonial role: to control and exert power. He goes on to discuss the ironic nature of maps in post-colonial literature. This provides critical points to engage the value of map-making. His argument offers a solid basis to examine the role of mapping in establishing the subject. If Huggan sets the tone for mapping, then Garuba presents the argument in full. He explores the function of maps and

notes that those who were mapped felt the impact (violence) of maps, despite their somewhat arbitrary creation. Garuba argues that mapping is a way to create and define identity; he goes on to say that it is also a way to erase what is present and overwrite these empty spaces with new narratives. Essentially, the lived experience is mapped over. Garuba goes beyond the spatial understanding of mapping and extends it to how bodies in the mapped spaces become signified. He claims that nationalists adopted the colonial cartography and in turn colonised women's bodies. He discusses the implications of bodies at length and comes to the conclusion that postcolonial geographies are not liberatory for women. Garuba adds that Farah creates a space for bodies to transgress borders and boundaries.

Shaping the story

In the first chapter, "Misra: Redefining Somali citizenry," I explore the characteristics that make Misra transgressive and consequently unrepresentable. The key identity markers that define her are gender, ethnicity, and foster mother status. Her sexual relations and abortion further mark her as especially dissident. The way she is killed is given considerable space as it has many implications for how she is remembered. The manner in which she is referenced in the final paragraph is analysed in detail, especially since Askar tells her story repeatedly to different people (mostly notably men in authority and linked to the legal system). In terms of Misra's death, I argue that her character is too important to be "lost at sea", and that her place of burial suggests that she is Somali in ways that the novel is unable to fully articulate.

In the second chapter, "Kainene: The unbecoming citizen," Kainene leverages being Igbo and high class to counter traditional gender expectations. Her actions are similarly analysed to unpack the tension between her characteristics that trouble the official liberation narrative and her strong sense of nationhood. The way Kainene mothers is one of the more crucial aspects of the chapter. She is mother to refugees fighting for an independent Igbo state. Unlike Misra, Kainene's disappearance is ambiguous. She seems to leave the narrative of her own accord with the idea to return and nourish her people, but she does not return to see the destruction of the Biafra dream and the assertion of Nigeria as a nation-state. I envision her disappearance across enemy lines as an absorption into the consciousness of Nigeria as a unified state.

The concluding chapter works through the arguments presented and argues for non-conformity and transgression as legacy. The key points raised in each chapter are tied

together and tensions are addressed to show how these dissident bodies are crucial to the development and the evolution of the idea of the citizen. I articulate the ways in which literature creates and challenges nation-building. This thesis gives space to the non-dominant and those on the periphery. It attempts to bring into the fold stray threads and non-conforming aspects of national identity. The thesis, in short, holds the messiness of citizenship presented within these novels through the characters of Misra and Kainene.

Misra: Redefining Somali citizenry

Truth be told, Misra's story in *Maps* is really more compelling, more 'epic' than Askar's.
– Kelley 35

This chapter explores Misra as a non-focalising yet principal and transgressive character in *Maps*. Her character breaks gender, ethnic and social boundaries broadening the definition of citizen and challenging the normative view of African womanhood. These transgressions render Misra dissident within her community and, as I argue, form the basis for her character being written out of the narrative. The writing out is a way to eliminate expressions of African womanhood that counter the normative view. Yet even as she is written out, her significance to the narrative plays out in the final pages of the novel and the reader is given a sense that her story continues. Misra's character offers new ways of envisioning African womanhood, Somalia and its citizenry.

I read *Maps* as an offering of "new maps for old" (Wright, "Guardians" 127). Yet, even as we explore the ways in which Misra opens up the dialogue about African womanhood and Somali citizenship, we are focused on a single question: [W]hy… is this m/other (actually, both m/others) so violently eradicated? (Kazan 260). The fact that "this violent eradication cannot be simply answered" (Kazan 260) is what drives this chapter.

In an interview with James Romm, Nuruddin Farah says,

> Fiction often provides an alternative universe, and in the creation of an alternative universe the author can start to dream… the fiction writer can alter the unjust narrative… My fiction usually tries to correct the incorrigible in society and to make sure that the voiceless are given a voice, the dictator is shown for what he is, and the weakness of patriarchy is also shown. That's what fiction can do, far better than most other forms of expression.

The notion that fiction can "provide an alternative universe" (Romm 2016) informs the way Misra is read. In *Maps*, we see Misra as a complex character who responds to her circumstances within her means (which is primarily through her body and labour). However,

we are aware of her intellect and insight into social hierarchies. She has a keen sense of self. Brown (125) argues, "Farah's *Maps* functions as readable traumatic testimonies of gendered and racialized colonial and postcolonial violence in Somalia." Misra's trauma, as the result of a *damoz* union, as a child sexualised by her adoptive father, as a refugee and, ultimately, as an Ethiopian woman, are explored. These aspects shape Misra's character and if she is read as a Somali citizen, as this thesis argues for, these aspects also forge a new Somali citizen.

Maps's narrative structure moves between time periods and numerous, detailed dream sequences are woven throughout the story. An additional complication is the unreliable narrator; the reader consistently has to scrutinise and moderate the information given. As a result, reading Misra is not a simple task.

Of interest is the way identity markers shift in terms of "peace" and war; between the rural area and the urban space; between the contested land and the capital. This is Farah's intention but the possibilities it produces are valuable as the Somali citizen is reimagined. Within the rural, contested area, Misra is shunned despite acting as a guardian for a Somali child. It is also the space where she is sexually exploited. In the capital, the urban space, she does not have a name, is almost invisible and has to be "adopted" by a couple her age. It is also the space where she is kidnapped, killed and buried. Moreover, when Kazan (263) claims that "[a] reading of *Maps* inevitably [sic] produces more questions than answers: questions of origin and memory, identity and violence", it pushes the notion of a Somali citizen into a future yet unmapped. It challenges the notion of a single, fixed reality and identity.

The chapter smooths the novel's narrative timeline: we begin with Misra's origin story and move to her time in the Kallafo community before proceeding to the Ogaden War. Throughout these discussions I evaluate the way Misra's gender and ethnicity impact her position. What follows is a discussion about her reunion with Askar in the capital and subsequent surgery, kidnapping, ritual murder and burial. Finally, I discuss Misra's body as a way to map her legacy.

Inauspicious beginnings

> Misra's unfinished Bildung is nested within Askar's narrative and so *Maps* is a representation of a world created – or worlded – within the text.
> – Brown 136

Outlining Misra's history is crucial for understanding her position within the Kallafo community and her transgressive role within the narrative. According to Ngaboh-Smart, "Misra's origin has an element of folklore… This makes Misra a 'floating signifier,' a history that is never properly made" (94). By the end of the novel, the reader cannot be sure of Misra's true origin and at that stage it seems irrelevant. Her abridged history, with fantastical elements, is narrated by the unreliable Askar:

> [Misra] was the offspring of a *damoz* union between an Oromo woman and an Amhara nobleman… Because the issue was a girl, the man lost interest in her, abandoning mother and child… Out of a raid… a warrior held tightly to a little girl, barely seven. The girl was his loot now that the enemy had retreated in haste… In Jigjiga, the warrior, weary and fatigued from travel and worry, took ill. He stopped at the first house and knocked on the first door and spoke with the first man he met – luckily for him, the owner of the house was a wealthy man... A day later, the warrior died… the little girl, who had been taken as his daughter, fell into the caring hands of the wealthy man… But he raised her with an eye to taking her as his wife when she grew up. And this he did, when she was seventeen… In the end… she murdered him during an excessive orgy of copulation… To escape persecution, she joined a caravan going south to Kallafo… Again she entered the household of yet another wealthy man. This time she entered as a servant but was, in less than a year, promoted to the rank of mistress and eventually as a wife… By the time she found Askar, the woman had been divorced. She had had two miscarriages… and her own child who had died at eighteen months. (71-73)

Kelley and Kazan detail this history but neither mention the manner in which these traumatic events are narrated. It is a neutral and matter-of-fact manner with a hint of disdain for Misra as a young woman. In this regard Wright ("Parenting" 181) suggests,

> [Askar] falsifies Misra's past, accusing her of murdering her adoptive father-cum-husband… whereas the truth is that her guardian forced himself upon her and a likelier cause of death was the old man's sexual over-enthusiasm.

Wright's assertion of "truth" cannot be verified but his interpretation seems highly probable, and demonstrates the narrator's bias towards Misra. Her social standing as a young woman limits her and the narrator lacks a nuanced perspective. The reader, however, is able to discern that Misra's flight is not a sign of guilt but is rather fuelled by fear.

This history tells us the following about Misra's character and her circumstances: She has no family to return to should a full-blown war break out. Even as an infant, her gender means that she is ostracised. As a child she is seen as property and a sexual object. Later in life, she suffers two miscarriages and loses a child. She is a divorcee within a Muslim community, an unfavourable social circumstance. These aspects all place her at the margins of the Kallafo community.

Kelley notes another aspect of Misra's origin that has considerable implications for the way she is perceived within the Kallafo community:

> [Misra] is not an ethnic Somali, though she is acculturated, if not wholly assimilated into the community…[Misra] herself has forgotten the Oromo language, and apart from Somali, she only knows Amharic. (22-23)

Oromo is Misra's mother tongue. She is able to speak Amharic, the language of the man who rejected her as an infant and she is able to speak the language of the community she lives in. The issue of her speaking Amharic, the language of Somali Ogaden's enemy, becomes a point of conflict later in the novel. However, she speaks the languages most pertinent to her survival. Moreover, the extract from Kelley's article suggests that Misra has acculturated to Somali life, if not entirely assimilated. Yet we come to learn that Misra questions the Somali bloodline, convinced that Somali relations are incestuous. So while the community may be suspicious of her and her loyalties, she is equally critical of them and the importance placed on a pure Somali bloodline. Misra's origin story may be less than reliable and her subsequent relationships unclear, in part due to an unreliable narrator, but ultimately she is aware of the precarious position she occupies in the Kallafo community, and Somalia. Moore explains,

> [Misra], though welcome to take the care of [Askar] off their hands, is a stranger, a woman with no husband or living child of her own. Though she has climbed from the status of servant to that of wife, her subsequent divorce and the death of her child have left her back where she started. (512)

Her role as caretaker of Askar gives Misra value within the community but it does not mean that she is wholly accepted:

> Because of her relations with [Askar], and because [he was] so attached to her, Misra's status in the community became controversial. To many members of the community, she was but that 'maidservant who came from somewhere else, up north' and they treated her despicably, looking down upon her and calling her all sorts of things…. They asked after [Askar's] health, although they did so with extreme caution, speaking articulately to Misra in the manner of one who was talking to a foreigner who didn't understand the nuances of one's language. (11, 15-16)

This excerpt sums up Misra's position within the community: controversial. They acknowledge that Askar chose her and that she takes good care of him but still question her loyalty and language proficiency. She has done nothing to court the community's suspicion at this stage but her origins from an unnamed place "up north" is enough to vilify her. It is even suggested that she bewitches[2] Askar to secure a position within his uncle Qorrax's compound. Misra "was not a *bona fide* member of the compound. It appears she became one, especially, when [Askar] chose her… the community of relations approved of [his] choice" (28, italics in original). Misra is an informal member of Qorrax's compound before Askar's arrival. How this came to be is not explained in the novel. We learn that Qorrax does not approve of Misra as his nephew's guardian until a year later (28).[3] "Mothering" Askar secures Misra's position in the community. It does seem peculiar that an infant is able to choose their caregiver, but the narrative affirms this story. In essence, a child of a Somali freedom fighter is raised by an Ethiopian maidservant. This paradox speaks to the complex role Misra holds within the community.

[2] Misra does practise witchcraft, but it is irrelevant at this point in the novel.
[3] I discuss the conditions on which he eventually approves of this arrangement later in the chapter.

The next time Misra's nationality and loyalty is brought up is at the start of the Ogaden War. Askar becomes aware that Misra is not as excited as the rest of the village when the Somali fighters dominate the Ethiopians (98). Askar asks himself whether Misra has truly chosen to be Somali and to celebrate their wins and mourn their losses as her own. This is the first time Askar questions Misra's loyalty to the Somali people. At the same time, it is a moment where Misra claims, "*I* am an Ethiopian" (98, italics in original). In the discussions that follow between the two of them, Misra shows rich insight into the social dynamics within their community and the difficulties she could face following a Somali victory.

There is a point where Misra's contribution to the Somali community is debated as being enough evidence that she is truly Somali. Thus she would not be treated as a foreigner should Somalia win the fight for the Ogaden area. But within the novel, the definition of what makes a Somali is convoluted and unstable. Hilaal says, "Misra, being Oromo…belongs to a peripheral people… And as such, the Oromo have either to assume Somali or Amhara identity" (170). While they are not directly in conversation, Misra claims her Ethiopian nationality. Hilaal does not suggest that she identifies as Ethiopian, rather that she offers ethnic allegiance. Curiously he also proposes she assume Somali identity after an earlier claim that "you are either a Somali or you aren't" (155). The latter means that Misra cannot simply assume Somali identity.

When Askar asks whether Misra would be able to apply for identity documents as a Somali, Hilaal responds:

> 'If her Somali is as good as yours, then I doubt if any bureaucratic clown would dare stand in her way or deny her what is hers by right'… 'What she might need is a couple of male witnesses to take an oath that they've known her all her life and that she is a Somali, etc., etc.; no more. And all they have to do is sign an affidavit, that is all.' (174-175)

Hilaal initially argues that Somali identity is fixed. Later, he argues that Somali identity is linked to language proficiency, and that it can be declared on an affidavit (in the instance of a woman, two men would need to bear witness). The sum of Hilaal's propositions suggests that

Somali identity is unstable since there are multiple and contradicting ways to claim Somali identity. One can argue that it is the undefined official borders reflects this instability.

Furthermore, when Hilaal explains the characteristics that make a person Somali he claims, "[h]ere, mother tongue is important, very important." As mentioned, Misra cannot remember her mother tongue, and Somali is her third language. Misra taught Askar to speak Somali so it stands to reason that she speaks Somali as well as he does though we know that she speaks Somali differently from native speakers. This is evidenced when Askar notes the way members of the Kallafo community speak to Misra (16) as if she cannot speak Somali. In addition, there are no men able to credibly vouch for Misra. The fact that Hilaal suggests this, knowing Misra's history, hints that Somali identity is less fixed than he admits. It is telling that Misra is the character this shift is related to and speaks to the way she transgresses the idea of national identity and destabilises it. It subtly highlights the way she impacts the other characters' ideas of national identity, most notably Salaado and Askar.

Hilaal's proposal highlights that Misra cannot legally assert herself despite her "knowing who she is" (26). This is an illustrative instance where gendered and ethnic boundaries overlap and determine Misra's agency. The suggestions Hilaal makes for Misra to claim Somali identity are unworkable. They border on being naïve as if he is not aware of the gendered and ethnic restrictions that Misra is faced with. The reader knows Hilaal to be better versed in these matters, yet it is also a moment where we see him broadening the definition of a Somali citizen. The reader is reminded that:

> We must be clear that while it may seem that Misra is all powerful; she is still a woman of her time and space. By adopting the infant Askar, Misra acquires a more secure identity… Misra may be a scapegoat, not only because of her non-Somali origins, but also because she is a defenseless woman. (Kelley 23-25)

While her performance of motherhood may work to reimagine Somali citizenship she does not choose this position for herself but performs the duty in such a way that she cannot be faulted. She acts, for the most part, in her best interests, and in ways that ensures her survival. She does not die a martyr; rather, she is made an example of by the Somali Liberation Front. Her independent spirit is crushed and may serve as a cautionary tale rather than a heroic one. The narrative, though, does not end with her death, and this is where her legacy lies.

Returning to the issue of national identity Ngaboh-Smart (87) points out "the need to break with the belief in a univocal Somali identity or with the ethnic paradigm provides an important context for understanding *Maps*". Wright ("Guardians" 131) breaks down Misra's position as follows:

> [T]he association of Misra with the foreign occupation of the Ogaden is ultimately a spurious one. She is, after all, an Amharic-speaking Oromo, not a full-blooded Ethiopian, and she has more cultural affinity with the occupied zone than with the occupier. She is herself an occupied possession on Somali as on Ethiopian territory, a slave-girl sexually colonized [and] violated by various occupying patriarchal wardens. Also, Misra, like Askar, is an uprooted orphan and her Oromo culture, like the Somali one, has been historically marginalised by its orality and oppressed by a literate Ethiopia. She is, in fact, doubly displaced: first as an Oromo living in Ethiopia and forced to speak the language of the dominant Amharic culture, and then as an 'Ethiopian' reviled by Somali ethnocentrism.

Therefore Misra could be understood as an "unperson". The term is taken from the novel but an explanation is never given. Wright ("Guardians" 117) proposes:

> 'unpersons'… cannot be admitted to a fully Somali identity… Misra, a non-ethnic Somali speaker who, though fully acculturated, is automatically mistrusted and is denied a place on her Somali ward's identity papers – a place which she has surely earned by fostering and educating him and suffering abuse in his Somali-Ogaden household.

Misra has been "doubly displaced" (Wright, "Guardians" 131). She spends a large part of her adult life in the Ogaden area: a contested space between Somali and Ethiopia. When exiled from Ogaden she moves to the capital of Somalia to seek refuge where she is killed and buried. I read this as the novel hinting towards an alternative national identity but one that cannot be fully realised within the novel. This progression of place is interesting because it seems that she is never safe "at home" and moves to ever more dangerous spaces trying to make it "home". It could be argued that where one is from, home, forms a crucial part of one's identity. Misra does not have the certainty of origin.

Misra as a mother figure and non-Somali may not yet birth a new Somali identity, but she offers one that has a future. Ngaboh-Smart (92) says, "Farah tries to show [that] the nature of the Somali national character, despite protests to the contrary, lies in its diversity or fluidity, paradoxical as this may sound." Farah highlights missed opportunities as a way of imagining a different future. It is an introspective narrative that is a lesson in diversity and reconceiving what makes a citizen. The reader is then made to see Misra and not Askar as the future Somali citizen.

Mother Misra

> (And all this time, Askar was thinking of the inherent contradictions – that she wasn't his mother, and the country wasn't hers; that she was teaching him *his* people's lore and wisdom, and some Amharic when night fell; that she wasn't married and hadn't a child of her own or a man she called "husband" but was happy for whatever that was worth; that he had no one to bestow the title of "Father" on, but a great many uncles, one of who was once married to Misra.) (134, parenthesis and italics in original)

This excerpt provides a lucid insight into Misra's character. She is noted as being happy despite leading a precarious life. The excerpt is in parenthesis technically implying that this is extra information that the reader could readily do without. Yet, it presents the reader with information that illuminates Misra's character and clarifies that she was once married to one of Askar's uncles, though he is never named.[4]

Misra embodies many mothering narratives: miscarriages, the death of a child, fostering an orphan, and choosing to abort. She is unable to carry a number of pregnancies to term. Within the context of the space she occupies and her marriage, she is unable birth a child in a contested area. When she does birth a child, the child is said to be "fatherless" and dies at a very young age. While not explicitly her choice, these "unfinished" forms of motherhood impacts the way Misra is viewed within the Kallafo community. The act of her abortion marks her as especially dissident; she elects to terminate her pregnancy which would seem to

[4] Misra has a "fatherless" child as well, suggesting that men within the Kallafo community cannot be publicly sexually linked to her.

give her some form of security within the community. This is an act where she takes control of her body and circumstances; weighing the cost of having another "fatherless" child.

"Mother" is an important role Misra plays in the novel. She parents Askar to develop independently of her influence. She does not force an identity onto him, but teaches him all she knows. She supports him as he goes through the Islamic rites despite knowing that this will lead to their eventual separation. She proves that motherhood is not fixed but is stripped of this status when Askar begins and furthers his education. Finally, she releases him to the capital without much protest even as it means that her status within the community is reduced, again, to nothing. In this vein, Brown (137) suggests,

> the testimonial body of Misra, more than any other in the novel, requires the consideration of new ways of conceiving not only motherhood, but also post-colonial 'Somalia'. Her mother-bond to Askar transgresses national, biological, and legal boundaries.

Askar is not Misra's biological child nor do they share a nationality. Even as she rears him she has no legal claim to him, evidenced when their relationship is not reflected his identity document. Thus, she may not fulfil the legally recognised ideal of motherhood but she fulfils the role without legal obligation or acknowledgement. Similarly, even though she does not fulfil the legislative definition of a Somali citizen, she fulfils the role and responsibilities of one.

If Misra represents a new form of motherhood, then it makes sense when Brown (132-133) claims, "As the nation is a symbolic mother to the Somali individual, Misra's increasingly mutilated body suggests that the loss of a healthy mother is tantamount to losing the ideal, or unified, nation." In this quote, Brown makes reference to three important moments for Misra's character: her gang rape, her mastectomy and her ritual murder. There are grave implications for wounding the mother particularly in terms of Somali cosmology; "in the Somali belief system, to wound the mother is to wound the nation" (Brown 132). Motherhood and nationality are unstable in *Maps*.

Ruggiero (563) claims, "Misra's mastectomy matches the defeat of the Somali army and the final loss of the Ogaden. Her breast cancer is simultaneous with the loss of the contested

territory; the mutilation of her body mirrors that of the land, the mastectomy becoming a metaphor for the loss of part of 'the milky breast of a common mother' with which Askar identifies Greater Somalia." It is notable that Misra has one breast removed. The breast is both sexual and nurturing. In this instance, we see how she is unable to fully perform the nurturing role of mother to the nation and lacks a parenting partner. What is telling about this explanation is that Ruggiero aligns Misra's bodily experience with the state of the Somali nation, not that of Ethiopia. In terms of mapping and bodies as the real holders of truth, this is an interesting notion and is taken up towards the end of this chapter.

Returning to Misra as mother, once in the capital, Askar questions the effect his identity papers will have on his psychology, but the real issue is whether there is any room for Misra in his identity papers (169). There is no space allotted to caregivers like Misra even though she means a lot more to [him] than anyone else (170). This is another of the more candid and lucid insights the reader is given. Askar cannot shake off Misra and feels "[He] had to betray either Misra, who had been like a mother to [him], or [his] mother country. However, part of [him] was worried – worried that a curse would be placed on [his] head by either" (180). This is one of the false binaries that Farah attempts to break. Loyalty to Misra would mean a diversified Somali citizenship.

We need new names

Misra "symbolises the shared, Cushitic heritage of both the Oromo and the Somali" (Kelley 25). Wright ("Guardians" 114) details the significance of her name within the text:

> Misra's name exists in [Oromo, Arabic and Ethiopian] and in its Somali form is an incomplete version of the Ethiopian 'Misrat', meaning 'foundation of the earth': thus it refers to the elemental, non-partisan character of the disputed strip of ground, which does not discriminate between its diverse occupying nationalities and the rival maps that overlay it like layers of a palimpsest.

However, we learn at the start of the novel, that "her name wasn't even Misra" (11). Ngaboh-Smart (94) observes that Misra's name undergoes a series of transformations during the narrative. I argue the ways her name "changes" represent shifts in character as well as the potential for a composite identity, ideal to represent the Ogaden as well as a diverse Somali citizen. The changes also highlight a woman determined to survive:

> Misra's given non-Somali name had a *t* in it, a *t* with which it ended but which she got rid of so that her name wouldn't raise eyebrows or provoke monstrous suspicions in the heads of the Somalis amongst whom she lived. But she restored the *t* when she fell in love with the Ethiopian security officer. (86, italics in original)

The excerpt from the novel suggests that Misra knowingly changes her name to protect herself and that she reverts to her real name when she falls in love. How the latter is known is questionable but it impacts the way she is seen. Similarly, it seems obvious that she would have an Ethiopian name, yet the fact that she comes to Kallafo with a Somali name is never openly questioned.

Furthermore, when Misra reaches the capital, "No one asked [her] about the t" (205) and, by default, about her rumoured betrayal. This is strange as she is honest about the circumstances that brought her to the capital. This point cannot be overlooked as Hilaal, Salaado and Askar later realise that they did not ask her what name she used to enter the capital despite knowing that she would not have been able to use Misra.

In relation to her name changes, the reader knows Misra rears Askar. Misra teaches him to speak Somali and about Somali folklore. Misra prepares him for his circumcision (perhaps reluctantly), and for his departure to be educated in the capital. Misrat, however, is considered a traitor who sells milk to the enemy and takes an Ethiopian lover. By the end of the novel, Askar is not sure what to call her and uses all her known names, in essence he evokes the sum of her lived experience.

The fact that she is not named on his identity document, and that there is no space for the role she has played in his upbringing, is resolved in a dream but not in the material world. Also, it is a dead man who acknowledges the impact she has had. No other living person, apart from Askar, credits her:

> Before the procession ended, there appeared – sitting on a throne, majestically, rested looking, like somebody at the end of all suffering, somebody who can only expect things to improve – Misra… She was the ruler of this land of games, of maps telling one's past and future, of vultures fighting a duel against dogs. A man approached…

> Apparently, he was Karin's husband… and, if others hadn't said so before him, he wished to thank her on behalf of the community of Kallafo for the good things she had done for young Askar. (249)

Misra as soulless beast

> 'I was raped,' she said… 'Someone arranged a dozen young men to rape me,' she said in a matter-of-fact manner… 'The story these young men circulated (and everyone who believed that I was a traitor had no difficulty accepting it) was that I had been raped by baboons'… The baboons said the poet amongst them (and one of them was a poet), smelt the beast in her… smelt her traitor's identity underneath the human skin and went for it again and again. Thank God, we were there to save her body since, as a traitor, she had ransomed her soul. (195)

This passage shows that Misra is not considered human by the Kallafo community, that her supposed treason makes a beast of her and justifies her rape. In fact, her rapists are considered heroes within the community. We, as readers, understand that her social standing as an Ethiopian woman means that the community is aware of the reality of her rape but they choose to accept the narrative they are given. This links curiously to an earlier moment when Misra questions Askar, "You know, of course, that Somalia is seen by her poets as a woman – one who has made it her habit to betray her man, the Somali, don't you?" (102). Instance there seems to be the suggestion that Misra represents Somalia, though a diversified vision of Somalia. What is particularly questionable is that Misra is punished for betraying Somalia but she is not considered Somali or granted respect within the community.

Hilaal tells Askar, "there is an element of superiority and inferiority relationships in sex.[5] The master has access to his servant/slave – Qorrax and Misra is a case in point – the teacher to his pupil – Aw-Adan and Misra" (235). Following this logic, Misra's rape is the national's access to the foreigner.

Delving deeper into earlier instances of Misra being sexually exploited and violated, Wright ("Guardians" 107) suggests: "Qotto teacher Aw-Adan… uses her sexually and finally betrays

[5] This quote is used as it stands in the novel but I vehemently oppose the idea that there is an "element of superiority and inferiority relationships in sex". Sex requires consent from equal partners, anything else is exploitation and/or violation.

her to the Western Somali Liberation Front." It should be noted that initially, Misra hid "from Aw-Adan, who has been pestering her with advances she didn't wish to return in like manner" (7-8). Aw-Adan wants to marry Misra but only if she releases Askar. Thus she can become a respectable member of the community but only if she agrees to the conditions set by him. His betrayal is one of a foreign man sacrificing a foreign woman to maintain his position within his adopted community. Misra's position makes her an easy target and as the local cleric Aw-Adan is highly regarded. Gendered dynamics play out here and intersect with assumed ethnic identity. On the other hand, Qorrax feels entitled to Misra though his manipulation of her affection for Askar suggests that she may have refused him in different circumstances:

> And then Uncle came. He came after nightfall and made his claims on Misra. It was one thing to make a political (that is a public) statement by being kind to her and myself, it was another to give something for nothing. He didn't confound issues – he would hire another woman in her place and dispense with her services unless she offered herself to him. I learnt later that she did. (29)

In addition to this Askar states "one of my uncles used to come and knock on the small window of our room after midnight and Misra would get out of bed and wash and prepare and wait for the second knock" (40). Whether this uncle is her ex-husband or a different uncle is not clear. What is clear is that Misra has to avail herself sexually to a number of men in the village. Askar asks, "How much of a child's body, or a woman's for that matter, can be said to be his or her own?" Hilaal responds with "Precious little" (55). Askar observes, "[a]fter all, she was a woman and she could be beaten or taken at will" (89). He also recalls that in Ethiopian stories "man was 'taker', woman the victim" (54). Misra must have been the one to tell him the Ethiopian stories which seem inappropriate to tell to such a young child. All these quotes point to the disempowered position women hold within both Somali and Ethiopian societies. It seems that regardless of kinship, women are always considered as less than respected members of the community.

Much like caring for Askar, there is an ambiguity in the sexual exchange with Misra. There may be desire for the woman Misra, but her ethnicity means that it cannot be publicly displayed. In all of these sexual violations, we return to Kelley's assertion that Misra, while powerful, is still a foreign woman. When she does use her agency and takes an Ethiopian

lover and lives with him, it is tainted and she is labelled a traitor. He is rumoured to be her half-brother even though the credibility of this claim is highly questionable. This seems to be the only sexual relationship she chooses for herself. In the passage below, Hilaal unpacks the prosecution of women who do not follow normative narratives:

> Hilaal said,
> 'In other words, she is a witch, a bitch, a whore and a traitor? What exactly did you say, Askar? Because if you say that Misra is a witch, a whore and a traitor, then you're not making an original statement.'
> 'Meaning?' asked Salaado.
> Hilaal shifted in his chair, 'Women as whores, women as witches, women as traitors of their blood, women as lovers of men from the enemy camp – throughout history, men have blamed women for the ill luck they themselves have brought on their heads… You've no proof, and you've asked for no proof. Men have always done that. They've condemned unjustly and asked for no evidence.' (186-187)

In Misra's instance the prosecution leads to her rape and ritual murder. It forces her from the Kallafo community to the capital. What piques my interest is that she decides to go to the capital in search of Askar as refuge instead of seeking refuge in Ethiopia. The capital is possibly the most dangerous place for her to be at that point in the narrative. Brown proposes,

> [b]y remaining in a Somalia that has savaged her, Misra uses her testimonial body to claim that oppressive space, reconfiguring notions of potential Somali personhood and charting the potential for a changed future. Askar remains behind after her death to record and reveal her story. (138)

Death in the capital

When Askar sees Misra after her arrival in the capital he thinks:

> [She] grew smaller as she aged… her voice had thinned, the brightness in her eyes had faded a little too… she was ugly as guilt, small and distant… Why, she was reduced to half her original size… her voice has lost its 'weight'. (190-192)

This passage reveals the impact his departure has had on her, particularly in terms of the way the community treats her. The narrative quickly reveals that she has breast cancer and she undergoes a mastectomy. When Askar asks her how she feels after the operation, she says:

> (Her state of mind was such that she couldn't determine how she 'felt'. 'Perhaps more like a man,' she said, half-laughing, 'now that I have to have the chest bandaged forever'). (218, parenthesis in original)

Misra relates the removal of her breast as becoming a man, and as a man she cannot birth a diversified Somali citizen. But she only loses one breast. The other remains. While recovering in hospital she is kidnapped and ritually murdered. However, before we hear of Misra's death Hilaal, Salaado and Askar wait four days for her to return home (244). Note that the narrator proposes that she "return home". Salaado suggests that the doors be left open in case Misra comes home while everyone is sleeping (242). Again, the idea of coming home is evoked. The doors are literally left open regardless of what dangers may visit the family while they are asleep. All that matters is that Misra is able to easily come home. This is a powerful statement, and it speaks to the deep desire for Misra's return. The period where they are unaware of her whereabouts "[n]othing else meant anything… Only Misra!" (242). They continue to set the table for four and expect her to return "alive and well" (243). This reflects Askar's sentiment that Misra means more to him than anyone else. The passage also speaks to the impact that Misra has had on Hilaal and Salaado.[6]

Death of a dream

> With the news of Misra's abduction and murder, it is as if a hole had been blown right through the heart of the novel; the novel explodes, loses its center, and ends quickly. So powerful is the impact upon Askar of Misra's death, so haunted is he by her, so obsessed by his memories of her warmth, her joy, that for him it almost seems to be more painful to live than to die. Certainly, he is filled with guilt, just the guilt of being

[6] Hilaal and Salaado's relationship initially confuses Askar to the extent that he does not even mention it in the "unposted, unfinished letters" he writes to Misra (19). We later see that Misra, too, is disorientated by the dynamics of their relationship (149-151, 159, 196). This is included because as much as Misra represents a different way of being, her sexuality is heteronormative and Hilaal and Salaado push the boundaries of gender conformity.

> alive. But so large does Misra loom, so great to him is her loss and so deeply does he feel it (and so too does the reader) that this calls into question all that has caused it: the war. (Dietche 556)

As Dietche observes, Misra's death changes the pace of the novel and it only takes ten pages from the passage to the novel's conclusion. Her death changes Askar's outlook and he is in turmoil because he suspects that the Somali Liberation Front is responsible for her death. He does not make a decision for his future by the end of the novel. His choices are to study or to join the liberation movement. Both choices seemingly betray Misra. Instead, the novel ends with him defending her memory and asserting his innocence in her kidnapping and death. We see Askar trying to make sense of his relationship with Misra as he tells her story. In doing so, he bears witness to her life as a Somali citizen and becomes a Somali man who confirms her Somali identity.

In a different way, Hilaal and Salaado claim Somali identity on Misra's behalf by claiming themselves as her guardians. They bribe the technicians to overlook the removal of her heart and hasten her burial to avoid suspicion. This shows development on their part as these are uncharacteristic actions. Salaado and Hilaal have become citizens who question the legitimacy of national identity. Farah makes a narrative decision to retrieve Misra's body (and her story), and Salaado overhears a conversation that reveals the location of Misra's corpse. This seems like a contrived narrative move and yet it suggests that even in death, her retrieval is important. Misra is not simply lost as many other war abductions. She is claimed and buried accordingly. If there are open-ended moments as to Misra's impact on the future, it cannot be otherwise. Her narrative is cut short.

Dreaming worlds into being

In Askar's final dream sequence, Misra says: "All that one hopes to remain of one is a memory dwelling in someone's head. In whose will I reside? Those who brought about my death, or yours?" (250). This is one of the few instances in the narrative where we "hear" Misra speak. It seems to imply that Askar is not responsible for her death. She asks directly in whose memory she will remain. By the end of the novel we know that she remains in the memory of Askar, Hilaal and Salaado. Her memory is passed onto the police and the men in gowns. Where her memory travels to after that we cannot know.

The burning question at this point is if Misra is finally laid to rest in the capital, or if she always searches for a place to call home? I do not believe that Misra finds rest in the capital. She dies without her heart, and alone. Yet it is the space where she remains, and perhaps even haunts. What of the fact of Askar's absence at her burial? Her death is not a resolution; it brings a new set of questions to the fore. Askar dreams:

> I asked [Misra] what her name was. She said she had no name, that I could give her one if I wanted. I asked her where she came from. She said she has no country she could call her own, that she was a refugee although she didn't know from where, and from whom she was fleeing and to what safe shelter. (135)

Misra cannot name herself because she occupies all the experiences she has endured with each name she responded to. Misra is also unable to claim a country as her own. Yet, despite the uncertainty, at least the reader knows where Misra is buried. The dream sequence seems to concretise the unknowable nature of Misra. It leaves the narrative open-ended because Somali identity at this stage is undefined. We know this because the narrative is unable to provide a clear definition of a Somali. The country's borders are permeable and as a consequence the definition of a Somali citizen cannot be fixed. The impact that Misra has on the lives of Askar, Hilaal and Salaado changes the way they understand themselves as citizens and what they understand as citizenship. In the next section, we consider what Misra's character does for the notion of citizenry, making special notice that it is narrated in parenthesis and dream sequence.

What form does truth take?

Kazan (261) claims "[t]he story [Askar] tells is the story of maps and borders, of political affiliation and national identity. The story that connects all these stories, however, is that of Misra". Misra, however, "has no understanding of maps" but a keen sense of the society she is part of and the role she plays within it (Wright, "Parenting" 183). Brown argues:

> Female and feminized bodies in the novel that transgress culturally determined gender boundaries find themselves in uncharted relationships with the emerging 'motherland'. They must reconstitute their understandings of femininity as it relates to the creation of a postcolonial community. Their gendered subjectivities come into play because the

> collective fiction of the nation hinges on its articulation of the (subject) position of women. (28)

In short Brown (28) articulates that the "collective fiction of the nation" requires women to adhere to a narrative where they are secondary citizens if they behave in a manner deemed suitable. Women who behave otherwise find themselves in opposition to the official narrative. Yet the Somali nation is not fully defined in the novel, if we consider that the Ogaden War is a boundary war at heart. This also disregards the impact that the uncertainty that war brings to communities and how uncharted ways of being has to come to the fore.

The way Misra enacts womanhood is a response to her immediate environment yet it is the influence of the Kallafo community that shapes her character. Misra is the character who maps an identity that moves towards resolving the confusion around what makes a Somali citizen. She enacts citizenship and is loyal to her community, acting within its best interests even when the choices she makes may not benefit her. In Misra, the Somali citizen is one that embraces diversity and social responsibility. However, as Kazan remarks, Misra is:

> configured through geography; she is, it is obvious enough, the mother/land... Eventually this adoptive mother will be renounced – in a violent and unsettling way… [a] ritualistic political murder. (258)

The argument of this chapter leans towards reading Misra as a Somali citizen not fully realised or recognised. Farah plays with and explores identity compositions through Misra. In Kelley's reading of the novel, "Misra represents Ethiopia in its diversity (i.e. as not solely Amhara but more fundamentally Oromo), and she also suggests the profound historical and present links between the Oromo and Somali people" (34). Brown thinks that "[b]y Misra's example, 'Somalia' might eventually transgress international boundaries and become instead a collective based on experiential and material similarities" (137). These arguments all fall in line with the idea that Misra represents the future of Somali citizenry.

Kazan (254) asks whether "one define[s] the borders of one's self (even provisionally) if one cannot define the borders of one's nation?" Misra is said to know who she is. She is the multiplicity of her origin and history; she occupies multiple spaces simultaneously. The question is whether official boundaries truly delimit individual identity particularly within

contested spaces. Both the countries she can lay claim to have disputed borders, specifically the border of the community she lives in. This entanglement is what makes Misra's position as citizen both precarious and promising.

Cobham notes "the crisis of individual identity is a crisis of gender and sexual identities that parallels and intersects with the socio-political manifestations of disorder, and it is this process of destabilisation that Farah's *Maps* enacts… [it offers] new ways of mapping gendered spaces" (84). This suggests that the nation-state and its composite communities are gendered spaces, and by every measure Misra's character embodies this crisis fully.

Aligned to this argument, Wright ("Guardians" 118) claims, "The body seems in the novel to be an alternative way of constituting identity, more reliable than maps." This is even while the body itself is marked and specific as a map. It is Hilaal who proposes that "[t]ruth is body" (236). The truth is that despite borders and boundaries, Misra's body represents a reality that a map cannot.

Evoking Legacy

> But I doubted very much if she was the type of woman who could lose herself in the eternity of a search for who she was – for she knew who she was.
>
> – Farah 26

Moolla suggests "[i]n a lucid glimmering, Askar recognises Misra as the true heroine of the story. She is the heroine since she appears not to be incapacitated by issues of identity as Askar is" (151). In the passage above, Askar acknowledges this knowing. She is the heroine in terms of her enactment of citizenship, freedom and independent action without romanticising the limitations placed on her. Askar tells Misra's story but she lives beyond Askar; she has impacted Salaado and Hilaal. Salaado becomes a mother figure in her search for and care of Misra. Hilaal becomes the reasoning man of the house in the face of Salaado's worry. In the characters of Hilaal and Salaado we see traditional gender roles subverted and claimed as the need arises. Their move between traditional and subversive gender roles is fluid, and linked to Misra's presence then disappearance.

The first time Askar tells Misra's story is to Hilaal and Salaado and:

> [he] began from the beginning, a second time and a third time. Misra was the heroine of [the] tale now and [Askar] only played a minor supporting role. Which was just as well. [Askar] needed to tell 'Misra's story', obviously. (148)

Misra's story is noted in quotation marks almost as if it is the title story. In telling her story, he legitimatises an alternative Somali citizen. But even more so, it is obvious that he wants to share her story. This storytelling is what takes us into the future; we cannot know the impact of the story but we know that it redefines Askar. On the final page, he tells the story:

> of (Misra/Misrat/Masarat and) Askar. First he told it plainly and without embellishment, answering the police officer's questions; then he told it to the men in gowns… And time grew on Askar's face, as he told the story yet again… In the process, he became the defendant. He was at one and the same time, the plaintiff and the juror. Finally, allowing for his different personae to act as judge, as audience and as witness, Askar told it to himself. (259)

The sequence of listeners is telling. Hilaal and Salaado, *bona fide* Somali citizens and academics, listen to Askar's telling and retelling of Misra's tale, thereby suggesting that the intellectual definition of citizen expands to include Misra. Then he tells the police and the "men in gowns" who represent the legal system. In doing so, the legal system has to reconsider the definition of a Somali citizen and whether Misra qualifies. But Askar is the final listener, in a multitude of personae, but also as the representation of the present Somali state. He is, finally, the only witness to Misra's life, as well as witness to himself. Throughout the novel, he considers her Somali and at this point, it takes hold fully. Earlier in the novel, Askar contemplates "when all others die, she won't, I would say to myself. So long as I lived, she would too. Either in me, or she would live a life independent from mine" (38). It appears that Misra lives in him as well as independent of him.

The question remains: why write out a character as transgressive and titillating as Misra? Farah is aware that even with all her power Misra cannot be fully welcomed into the fold just yet. Misra's character alludes to this through the novel. The present citizenry of Somalia need to broaden their definition of a Somali citizen before this is possible and Misra is the

reference point. Without a reference point, the promises of a diverse Somali citizenry will be raped, denigrated, violated and ritually murdered. This is reflected in the final pages where Askar, a Somali citizen, broadens his definition of a Somali citizen and articulates this in a court of law. She then enters into the "imagination" of the legal system. There is no space on the Somali map as yet for Misra but there are traces of her.

Kainene: The unbecoming citizen

Half of a Yellow Sun is set in the 1960s against the backdrop of the Biafra War[7] and can be read as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie writing into the African literary canon. Brian Doherty (187, 190) argues "[t]he perspective that emerges is not necessarily of someone who was misrepresented in the originary text, but of someone underrepresented, under-considered". According to Obi and Okunrobo,

> [Kainene's] character reveals that there are women who in one way or the other contributed to the survival of many during the war. However, such women are never acknowledged or misrepresented or underrepresented. (91, 99)

This chapter attempts to mimic this move within the scholarly field by giving space to Kainene Ozobia. The first point to address is why Kainene is the focus as opposed to equally interesting non-focalised characters such as Amala or Baby/Chiamaka.[8] The deciding factor is that Kainene plays an important role within the narrative but more specifically in the lives of the protagonists. Akpome (28) claims, "Richard and Olanna operate under the considerable influence of Kainene." She is largely meditated through these two protagonists. Olanna is Kainene's twin sister and essentially acts as her foil while providing insights into her formative years. Richard is Kainene's partner and it is through his eyes that we see the complexity of Kainene's character which Olanna's perspective tends to flatten. However, her impact on Ugwu, the third protagonist, makes her presence significant. The interplay between these two characters who have limited interaction provides compelling hints to citizenship and whose story is told. Kainene is the character that is a moral and ethical compass even as she herself takes some questionable actions. This chapter highlights the ways Kainene transgresses traditional gendered roles before and during the Biafra War.

This thesis begins filling in the void within academic critique of *Half of a Yellow Sun* (hereafter referred to as *Yellow Sun*). I expand on scholarly work, predominantly centred on

[7] Scholars such as Coffey have done well to outline the historical aspect of the Biafra War.

[8] I use this way of naming Chiamaka to remain true to the narrative but to also recognise that "Baby" infantilises Chiamaka and even while it is capitalised, it is a generic term stripping her of her individuality.

the focalising characters, to accommodate the nuances of Kainene's character even if the possibilities and potentialities do not come to fruition within the narrative. It is the potential that is the focus and based on this, we delve straight to the heart of this enquiry as phrased by Azuike (91): "[O]ne may wonder why Kainene's life is ended so abruptly. Of what significance is this ending to the story?"

Coffey (71) offers the following explanation, "Adichie's novel might, at first glance, appear to end in a clear-cut tragedy. An allegorical reading of the novel, however, suggests an alternative that leaves political possibility and threat open." Novak emphasises "Kainene's absence haunts the closing of the text. A pragmatic and energetic voice throughout the book, her disappearance creates a startling void in the narrative" (46-47).

The enquiry has a simple structure. We explore Kainene's characterisation through the three protagonists and look at how her presence challenges the official narrative. We start with Olanna, continue with Richard and end with Ugwu. Following from this, the significance of her disappearance is considered from different aspects based on her characterisation. As a matter of interest we also explore other loose ends the narrative presents as alternative possibilities and points of intrigue.

Transgressive gendered perspective

Ouma states, "*Half of a Yellow Sun* privileges… the feminist consciousness that presents a counter-discourse to a patriarchal one" (35). I am in agreement with Ouma when he claims that *Yellow Sun* privileges a feminist agenda even as it has two male protagonists who are also the authorial figures in the novel. The latter point is picked up when we discuss Ugwu and Kainene's relationship. Ouma (37) continues,

> Through staging a conversation with those who could not speak or whose voice was considered noise, her narrative strategies disturb the nation-state's attempt at (re)production of stable meanings, histories and identities.

This excerpt speaks to the reach and limits of representation. Kainene is a complex character. Kainene is given space in the narrative, however, that space is limited as her character is predominantly mediated through other characters. Yet the reader recognises that Kainene is heard, and holds authority within her community. She shuns her sister for sleeping with her

partner, yet forgives her partner after burning his most promising manuscript. She chooses an interracial romantic relationship that is largely disapproved of. She pointedly mocks the intellectuals who philosophise from their living rooms and in newspapers. She confronts and ousts the local cleric who rapes young girls before he feeds them. Before the war we see a woman, albeit one from the upper class, fully engaged in the business world. At the start of the war she profits by importing stockfish. Towards the end of the war she runs a refugee camp. She is competent, loyal and dedicated. These factors all shape Kainene's character and seem to construct a narrative that cannot be comfortably contained within the novel, or the nation-state. Kainene's actions represent the tension between her characteristics that trouble the nation-state narrative and her strong sense of the Igbo nation. Her character is often referred to as "transgressive" in this chapter. I choose the term because she disrupts the conventional representations of African womanhood and her "presence" forces a new narrative. Her embodiment of African womanhood is enticing and somewhat seductive, a sentiment that is carefully engaged with.

Kainene is an authoritative figure in the text. She commands her space and respect. In many instances when Kainene is described it is almost always to depict her as emotionally cold, one such instance is, "Kainene was muted and quiet but never tearful…" (138). Yet, for all her strength we see glimpses of Kainene's humanity and her fragility as the novel progresses.

According to Hanif (62) Adichie's "[w]omen characters assert their identity just not in terms of daughters, wives, sisters or even women but as human beings". This brings to mind the Combahee River Collective's "Black Feminist Statement" where, as women, they ask "to be recognised as human, levelly human" (166). This particular aspect is clear in the often contradictory ways Olanna and Richard see Kainene. It opens the way to read Kainene not as a heroine as claimed by Ikediugwu (14) but as a citizen.

Kainene lives with her romantic partner, the white Englishman Richard Churchill. Her relationship is an additional complicating factor in the way it positions her in the official narrative: as an African woman dating an English white man, her "ability" to birth and mother the emerging Biafra nation or to strengthen the established Nigerian state is a thorny issue in terms of citizenship and identity.

Kainene is described as “the withdrawn child, the sullen and often acerbic child… she did not try to please [her] parents” (36). Yet she manages “the cement factory” and “oversee[s] everything in the east, the factories and [the] new oil interest. She has always had an excellent eye for business… Kainene is not just like a son, she is like two” (31). In these excerpts we see that Kainene’s womanhood is denied and her success qualified by likening her to two sons. Azuike (79) suggests that “[Adichie] upholds female potentialities which the patriarchal structure has repressed”. In this instance Kainene demonstrates a skill set that defies rigid gendered expectations and this is largely due to her social position. In the novel, her position is not easily seen as a woman excelling at tasks traditionally assigned to men; she *has* to be likened to men in order to validate her contribution.

There is also the tension between her not pleasing her parents yet managing parts of the family business. Darie (1060) reads this as “Kainene strongly assert[ing] her freely-assumed manhood”. Her partner Richard observes, “[h]er work came first; she was determined to make her father's factories grow, to do better than he had done” (62). This excerpt almost reads as the old story of the son wanting to impress and outshine his father; in this instance it is the daughter. Moreover, this passage seems to imply that her personal relationships are secondary to her business commitments and this distinguishes her from women whose first priority is suppose to be the household; it distinguishes her from Olanna’s domesticity.

Uwakweh (90) claims that war (an abnormal circumstance) breaks down social structures allowing altered gender identities and codes to emerge. I argue that this is dependent on social class, and that it happens in normal circumstances. The conventions are not as rigid as suggested though they are only permeable under certain circumstances. Kainene takes a traditionally masculine role before the war, and continues this throughout the war. Ironically, during the war she runs the refugee camp blending masculine and feminine roles.

With all these aspects to Kainene’s character, it is pertinent to ask what Kainene represents in the text? As many scholars have noted, she could be read as an allegory of the Republic of Biafra. She stands for more than herself, complicatedly so. In short, Kainene is “the sceptical materialist entrepreneur with the English lover and the androgynous look” (Boehmer 148).

Distorted mirror image: Olanna and Kainene

Olanna obsesses about Kainene's confidence and strength of character. In one exchange, Olanna "did not hear much of what Kainene said, because she was thinking of how unrelenting Kainene's confidence was" (347). Yet this confidence tends to have a negative slant. When her mother tells Olanna about her father's mistress, the following exchange takes place:

> 'Maybe we should wait for Kainene to visit so she can talk to your father instead, *nme*?' Her mother said, dabbing at her eyes again.
> 'I said I would talk to him, Mum,' Olanna said.
> But that evening, as she walked into her father's room, she realised that her mother was right. Kainene was the best person for this. Kainene would know exactly what to say and would not feel the awkward ineptness that she did now, *Kainene with her sharp edges and her bitter tongue and her supreme confidence*. (218, italics mine)

Kainene is depicted as having "sharp edges and [a] bitter tongue". In the same vein, Kainene's confidence is marked as supreme, placing her in a realm that is not accessible to other humans. It is almost as if Olanna makes Kainene a heroine but a dark one. Nonetheless, "[S]he felt an odd sense of accomplishment to have talked to her father like Kainene" (222).

The complicated relationship between physicality, confidence, sexuality and masculinity is illustrated in the excerpt that follows. Warped power dynamics come to the fore. Mrs Muokelu, an acquaintance of Olanna during the war, equates smoking and red lips to prostitution as if to suggest that a woman cannot make these choices for reasons other than to signal sexual availability to men. In turn, Olanna considers Mrs Muokelu's appearance and considers her beard and hairy arms (presented as masculine features in this instance) as malice. These are probing elements in terms of defining African womanhood.

> The thick, black hair on her arms and legs, the fuzz on her upper lip, the curled strands on her chin, and the squat, muscular limbs often made Olanna wonder if perhaps Mrs Muokelu would have been better off being born a man… Yet Mrs Muokelu had always seemed familiar… Mrs Muokelu exuded fearlessness, a fearlessness that reminded Olanna of Kainene. (264-265)

And,

> ‘You remind me of my sister’, she said.
> ‘How?’
> ‘She’s very strong. She’s not afraid.’
> ‘She was smoking in that picture you showed me. Like a common prostitute… I am not saying she is prostitute,’ Mrs Muokelu said hastily. ‘I am only saying that it is not good that she smokes because women who smoke are prostitutes.’
> Olanna looked at her and saw a malevolence in the beard and hairy arms. (271)

Aside from the commentary above, there is also a note of threat in the way Olanna sees Mrs Muokelu attacking Kainene. It is a masculine attack even when Mrs Muokelu is a woman. At the same time, there is an equation between masculinity and Kainene. In its entirety and coupled with the passage before, the issue of Kainene almost seems beside the point but because she is equated to two sons this cannot be easily dismissed. These excerpts represent themes in the novel at a scale that transcend Kainene. However, it is useful to see how she is evoked in this instance, almost innocently. Fearlessness is assigned as a masculine trait not accessible to women. Yet, there are moments when Olanna herself demonstrates fearlessness as discussed later.

On a different note, Mrs Muokelu’s observation is not necessarily off the mark. The twins’ parents do prostitute their daughters to acquire business deals. This is something that Kainene is cognisant of when as she asks Olanna, “So will you be spreading your legs for that elephant in exchange for Daddy’s contract?” (35). This directness is also a key characteristic of Kainene. She is very clear about her observations and calls issues by their name.

This conversation between the twins at a party hosted by their parents illustrates Kainene’s directness: she tells Olanna, “[t]he benefit of being the ugly daughter is that nobody uses you as sex bait” (35). She is aware of the way women are positioned within her society, particularly the upper class. She is clear on what is considered beautiful and that she does not fit the profile. Her acknowledgement of these facts gives her power, as she cannot be victimised by it. When looking at the twins’ side by side Richard thinks, “Kainene looked even thinner next to Olanna, almost androgynous, her tight maxi outlining the boyishness of her hips… and a near flat chest” unlike a body “Susan would call African” (60). These extracts highlight the way her physical body does not conform to what an “African” woman’s body is expected to look like. It also highlights the way Kainene relates to traditional ideals.

Still, seeing Kainene through Richard's eyes, he observes, "She looked almost pretty with her smoothing powder and red lipstick and relaxed demeanour, not as knotted up as she had been lately, chasing a contract with Shell-BP" (134). It is key to note that Richard does not consider her physically attractive. Instead, he is drawn to her "melancholy mystique" (65) something he finds lacking in Olanna.

Returning to Olanna's gaze, when Kainene launches a programme at the refugee camp to grow food, "when she joined the men and women and children in making ridges, Olanna wondered where she had learned to hold a hoe" (389). It is clear that Kainene has adapted to war in ways that Olanna did not imagine possible. Kainene has transcended her class and done the necessary to survive.

In many ways, "[Olanna] wished she was different, the sort of person who did not need to lean on others, like Kainene" (103). Equally, "Kainene's approval, something she had never felt before, was like a sweetness on her tongue, a surge of ability, a good omen" (252). Olanna seems to harbour a warped image of Kainene. Yet, this reverence of Kainene is not limited to Olanna. It is shared by Richard and Ugwu though its manifestation is much darker. Richard keeps his betrayal a secret so as not to lose Kainene. Ugwu does not speak about the girl in the bar for fear that Kainene would loathe him. The secret keeping is linked to the fact that "Kainene doesn't forgive easily" (243).

This reverence is why Olanna struggles to accept Kainene's disapperance; she resists moving back to Nsukka after the end of the war and hopes Kainene will return based on unlikely cases. Olanna says, "[o]ne woman from Umudioka went on *afia attack* and the vandals occupied that sector so she was cut off for four months. She came back to her family yesterday" (413). The first thing that Olanna says when the end of war is announced is, "Now I can go and find my sister" (412), as if the war was simply a hindrance to her searching for Kainene when it is because of the war that she has disappeared. There is also Olanna's resistance to returning home,

> Olanna did not want to pack – there was little to pack anyway – and did not want go anywhere. 'What if Kainene comes back?' she asked.
> '*Nkem*, Kainene will find us easily.' (412)

Olanna becomes desperate in her search for Kainene and in the instance below channels Kainene's strength and confidence. The family is returning to Nsukka after the war has ended and are stopped at a check point. They are ordered out of the car, and a soldier looks at Olanna in a sexually predatory way. Olanna pre-empts any form of harassment,

> 'You had better tell your boy here that it will be better for him not to even think about touching me,' Olanna said.
> Ugwu was behind her, and she sensed his intake of breath, his panic at her boldness. But the officer was laughing; he looked both surprised and impressed. (417)

Even with this channelling of Kainene at a critical time, we see her become manic trying to locate Kainene. The obsession is so great that the reader anticipates a Dark Swoop. This calls to mind "the first time Olanna saw… Kainene cry since they were children" (157). Which is telling in its own right. Richard never actually sees Kainene cry, he only sees the result of her crying. Ugwu sees her cry tears of rage. In fact, even when Richard sees the effect of Kainene's crying it is because he had sex with Olanna. In both instances, Olanna is the cause of Kainene's tears. The sisterly bond may not be obvious yet it is strong. We see this in the impact Kainene's disappearance has on Olanna (431), "it was not grief that Olanna felt, it was greater than grief. It was stranger than grief. She did not know where her sister was. She did not know." And since she does not know, Olanna embraces and evokes the idea of reincarnation at end the novel, an idea she would ordinarily dismiss.

> 'Mama said the baby looks like her mother. It is her mother come back.'
> 'People just look alike, Ugwu, it doesn't mean they reincarnate.'
> 'But they do, mah. All of us, we will come back again.'
> Olanna waved him away. (253)

Then after Kainene's disappearance,

> 'We come back again,' she said.
> 'Our people say that we all reincarnate, don't they?' she said. '*Uwa m, uwa ozo*.
> When I come back in my next life, Kainene will be my sister.' (433)

Obsessive love: Richard and Kainene

> Kainene raised her eyebrows, sardonic, as if his reasoning did not make sense to her, and because of that he was afraid to tell her that he sometimes thought he loved her too much… – Adichie 115

The power dynamic in Kainene and Richard's relationship is unconventional. Throughout their relationship Kainene is in control and dictates the pace of their interaction. Even when Richard invites her for a drink, she is the one who decides the time and offers a private suite (60). Later in their relationship we learn that Richard "sat at the dining table at Kainene's house…" (166). Their relationship is a reversal of assumed gender and racial roles as she is the wealthy business person and he is directionless and unemployed. However, despite these power dynamics their relationship shows Kainene's rage, emotional vulnerability as well as her business ethic.

Kainene has studied[9] in London and according to Mama, a rural woman and Olanna's mother-in-law, "[t]oo much schooling ruins a woman" (37, 98). Mama goes onto say that "[i]t gives a woman a big head and she will start to insult her husband. What type of wife will she be?" (98). Similarly, Azuike (81) says African girls at the time "were to stay at home to practise and perfect their domestic skills which included how to behave as appropriate Christian housewives who knew how to sew, cook and maintain proper hygiene". Of course, Kainene has men who do her domestic work so this is not an issue. She does not get married nor does she have children, as is expected of her. Moreover, both her and Olanna do not long to have children (104). This is a fundamental subversion of traditional gender roles and expectations. Still, this lack of desire eliminates the need to manage the difficulty of having a child whose mother is Igbo and a father who is British.

The reader is aware that Richard is besotted with Kainene and is willing to betray her twice to remain with her. "[H]e was determined that Kainene would never know" (235) about Olanna. One has to question this logic as it contradicts the respect he seems to have for her. It is not necessarily a deliberately cruel decision but misguided nonetheless. It is as if Richard is incapable of being true to Kainene despite his best efforts to the contrary.

[9] The reader never knows what she studied whereas we know that Olanna has a Master's in Sociology.

Yet Richard pays close attention to Kainene from the first time he sees her. However, his first impression is not flattering and shows up his expectations of an African woman in her position:

> [H]e glanced at her and thought she was the mistress of one of the politicians… He didn't think that Kainene was some wealthy Nigerian's daughter because she had none of the cultivated demureness. She seemed more like a mistress: her brazenly red lipstick, her tight dress, her smoking… She didn't even have the generic prettiness that made him inclined to believe the rumour that Nigerian politicians swapped mistresses. In fact, she was not pretty at all. (57)

Richard sees Kainene as enacting the role of mistress, whereas Mrs Muokelu sees a prostitute. Either way, the impression is not of a woman who makes her own wardrobe choices. Despite this observation Richard seeks out Kainene in the room and offers to take her for a drink. In one of their subsequent meetings he tells her about his failed attempt at running away as a child. In turn, she tells him, "'I knew what I wanted to run to. But it didn't exist, so I didn't leave,' Kainene said, leaning back on her seat" (62).[10] This is a quiet yet telling moment. She is relaxed in the suite and reveals something rather personal about her younger self. The reader may even overlook this moment of intimacy, though we may recognise that this is not something that Olanna is aware of.

Later in the novel, we see a different Kainene. The one who by chance finds out about Richard's betrayal. Her action is decisive and seemingly cold:

> Richard remembered how she had destroyed his first real manuscript, *The Basket of Hands*, how she had led him to the orchard, to the pile of charred papers under his favourite tree, her face all the time expressionless… (182)

Later he reiterates, "[h]er face was expressionless. 'I took your manuscript from the study this morning and I burnt it,' she said" (258). She destroys what she feels he holds most dear,

[10] What this place is we never know, and her disappearance adds to the conundrum and allows for a number of possibilities. Perhaps this place is the space where her different aspects of her identity are not at odds. Or even where her transgression of conventional roles are celebrated.

presumably in relation to the way he hurt her. However, the reader knows that losing her is what scares him the most. This incident also relates to the fact that the two authorial figures in the novel are men. By burning Richard's manuscript, Kainene symbolically destroys the British version of the Biafra War. Notably, Ugwu dedicates the book to Odenigbo only after Olanna accepts that Kainene won't return in this lifetime.

The burning of his manuscript is pivotal in revealing that Kainene feels deeply despite the characterisation of her being emotionally detached. The morning after she finds out about the betrayal when Richard attempts to talk to her, "[s]he looked up, and he noticed, first, that her eyes were swollen and raw, and then he saw the wounded rage in them. 'We will talk when I want to talk, Richard'" (257). Even in a highly emotional state, Kainene is able to articulate her needs and boundaries. Still, "the wounded rage" in her eyes is a testament to the betrayal by the people she holds dearest. This rage, however, does not last. There comes a time "[w]hen [Richard] thinks of proposing to her, he knew she would say yes. It was something about her lately, a mellowing, a softening…" (151). This excerpt comes after Richard finds a note from Kainene in his luggage. He recognises that the violence and uncertainty of war has changed her. However, we see this softening become erratic and unstable. It begins the first time he takes cover with her,

> she lay flat and rigid on the ground next to him… Kainene dusted herself down carefully, but the ground was wet and the mud had stuck to her clothes; her blue dress looked designed with chocolate-coloured smudges… Richard sensed that Kainene was angry. (311)

This anger becomes a force for action and good in the novel. When tragedy strikes, Kainene gets down to business. "Richard turned and stared at her and felt the urge to cry. He wished he was as calm as she was, that his hands would not shake as he washed them" (316). Olanna has the same desire to be like Kainene and even manages to do so in certain circumstances. However, we see this calm and confidence become both productive and destructive. On the one hand she becomes the new food supplier for the refugee camp (318). But as the war progresses and Kainene bears witness to increasingly violence acts Richard observes, "[t]here was a manic vibrancy about her, about the way she left for the refugee camp each day, about the exhaustion that shadowed her eyes when she returned in the evenings" (318). Later, "Richard was startled by Kainene's violence. There was something brittle about her, and he

feared she would snap apart at the slightest touch; she had thrown herself so fiercely into this, the erasing of memory, that it would destroy her" (320).

The war changes her in such a way that "[she] was on a sofa in the living room, her arms wrapped around herself, rocking back and forth… She spoke too fast" and "[s]he often withdrew into silence in the middle of a conversation, and when she did, he let her be; sometimes he envied her the ability to be changed by what had happened" (137, 167). The reader sees Kainene's full emotional range through Richard's eyes. But the change in her temperament also depicts the reality of the war on the ordinary citizen. Her demeanour does not change per se. She suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder. This is a real consequence of war as well as having to be the strong, black woman at all times.

The most traumatic event that Kainene experiences is the death of one of her workers as they are trying to escape the city,

> The body was running, arched slightly forwards, arms flying around, but there was no head. There was only a bloodied neck. Kainene screamed… 'Are you all right?' Richard asked her. She did not respond. There was an eerie blankness in her eyes. (317)

There are multiple references to her eyes depicting her emotional state. Kainene, in different ways to Olanna, carries the effects of the war in everything she does. Incidentally, the last time we see Richard it seems as if post-traumatic stress disorder has taken a firm grip on him too,

> Darkness descended on him, and when it lifted, he knew that he would never see Kainene again and that his life would always be like a candlelit room; he would see things only in shadow, only in half glimpses. (430)

A stolen narrative: Ugwu and Kainene

Ugwu and Kainene have limited interaction in the novel. I focus on two moments which seem critical to the influence Kainene has on Ugwu. The first is her reaction to the rapes of the young girls in the refugee camp, and the second is Ugwu transcribing the twins' evening conversations without their knowledge.

Kainene is unshakable in what she believes to be ethically and morally necessary. When she learns of the cleric raping the girls in the refugee camp, she rages:

> 'Can you believe who is responsible for that small girl Urenwa's pregnancy?' Kainene asked, and Ugwu almost did not recognise her. Her eyes bulged out of her angular face, filled with rage and tears. 'Can you believe it is Father Marcel?'…
> 'He f*cks most of them before he gives them the crayfish that I slave to get here!'
> Later, Ugwu watched Kainene push at Father Marcel's chest with both hands, shouting into his face, shoving him so hard that Ugwu feared the man would fall…
> There were tears running down her face. There was something magnificent in her rage. Ugwu felt stained and unworthy as he went about his new duties after the priests left – distributing *garri,* breaking up fights, supervising the scorched and failing farms. He wondered what Kainene would say, what she would do to him, feel about him, if she ever knew about the girl in the bar. She would loathe him. (398-399)

Kainene's (rightful) anger makes Ugwu feel "stained and unworthy". He assumes she would loathe him. This seems like a reasonable response, yet Kainene's reaction to Richard's betrayal is not what the reader expects, although she does burn Richard's manuscript before forgiving him. It would be an interesting turn of events if Kainene burnt *The World Was Silent When We Died*. This would mean that the narrative of the Biafra War would change and that war atrocities would have to be laid out differently. The idea of Kainene loathing him, alongside the other women in the text spurs him to write to atone for his wrongdoing. Many scholars have criticised Adichie for providing such a simple way for Ugwu to atone for his crimes. I do not read it as simply: Ugwu is cognisant of his actions and is aware of his positionality in this way. The real test would be whether or not he acknowledges the rape in the narrative he writes. This is something the reader cannot know.

Kainene's choice of words is unambiguous, she is clear about the rapes and the moral indefensibility thereof. This then brings into question her role as a war profiteer. While she may not have directly harmed anyone, her actions are not morally exempt from criticism though it should be noted that her actions are in no way comparable to Ugwu's actions. Kainene is honest about her business as a war profiteer. She tells Olanna, "I was an army contractor, and I had a licence to import stockfish… Are you silently condemning me for

profiteering from the war? Someone had to import the stockfish, you know… Many contractors were paid and didn't deliver. At least I did" (343). There is a justification here and despite the ethics of profiteering from the war, Kainene is also a highly practical person, possibly to a fault. Ugwu does not seem to exhibit this level of openness about his war crimes.

In turn we could read Ugwu's transcription in the same way we read Kainene's war profiteering. While it may not be seen as ethical, it serves a larger purpose. Kainene influences Ugwu on a moral level yet his interaction with her is troubling. Inadvertently, he uses the twins to write his story. Olanna narrates parts of her story to him but Kainene does not. Again, one has to consider whether he will implicate himself in the rape of the girl in the bar. One can question whether Ugwu has the right to write the women's story in the same way that one questions whether Richard is the right person to write about the Biafra War. While Olanna willingly tells Ugwu about the train ride and the girl's head in the basket, the discussions between the sisters do not involve him or their partners for that matter, but

> He listened to the conversations in the evenings, writing in his mind what he would later transfer to paper. It was mostly Kainene and Olanna who talked, as though they created their own world that Master and Mr Richard could never quite enter. (399)

It seems as if Ugwu co-opts the twins' narrative and writes it as his own. He listens to the way they have created their own world and does not consider whether he, alongside other men, is invited into this world. He places himself into the narrative without permission to do so. Ultimately, he dedicates his book to Odenigbo (433). This complicates who the Biafra story is written about as well as the intended audience. Of course, it makes sense that Ugwu would dedicate his book to Odenigbo but it does not acknowledge the influence Olanna has on him, or that she protected him from conscription the first time, or that she believed that he could be a teacher, or any of the other sacrifices she made for the family's survival. By omitting her in this way, he erases her.

Kainene: The forging of a citizen

Within her home Kainene is in command. She owns the house and Richard lives with her. She has male staff members: Ikejide, Nnanna, and Sebastian (76). At the same time, it is the one space where her relationship with Richard is openly criticised and she has to establish

boundaries: "Kainene replied, in cold, clear English, 'My choice of lovers is none of your business, Udodi'… 'It's a new slavery, I'm telling you, a new slavery'" (80-81). In this excerpt, Udodi says a black woman in a relationship with a white man is enslaved. In one sense this is true. Richard does not work to maintain the household, but it is an oversimplification to suggest Kainene is Richard's slave. It disregards the dynamics of their relationship. In addition, it is highly improbable that a black man in a relationship with a white woman would be challenged by guests in his house. This incident demonstrates the lack of respect shown to women despite their social and economic position.

After Kainene's disappearance Richard returns to their once shared home. It is occupied and he reflects, "[Kainene] would try to get it back, he was sure, she would write petitions and go to court and tell everyone that the federal government had stolen her house, in that fearless way of hers" (427). He, however, is unable to take that type of action. Similarly, when Kainene's mother talks about the homes that they lost during the war she laments, "[Her husband] is grateful they let him keep a house that is his own. Kainene would never tolerate that" (427). Kainene is appreciated for the ways in which she can claim what they consider to be rightfully theirs. It is as if she can be trusted to fight for what is ethical and moral. Kainene is the voice and protector of vulnerable young girls. We see throughout the novel that Kainene proves to be a strong and nurturing figure to Baby/Chiamaka. She provides food and guidance to the refugees. In the end, she sacrifices herself. In a sense (and definitely in a generous reading of the novel), Kainene is always working to protect and defend the most vulnerable of the Igbo people.[11]

Kainene is patriotic; she is fiercely loyal to Biafra and critical of its leadership. From the *World Was Silent When We Died*: "What mattered was that the massacres frightened and united the Igbo. What mattered was that the massacres made fervent Biafrans of former Nigerians" (205). This sentiment is evident in Kainene's character and she is suspicious when Richard calls himself Biafran. Kainene sees the creation of the Republic of Biafra as a way of

[11] The fact that the displaced Igbo people are referred to as refugees is thought-provoking. If Kainene is running a refugee camp, then the people occupying it have to be from a country where they are no longer politically safe. But if they are in Nigeria, even if in the region marked as the Republic of Biafra they cannot be refugees.

unifying and liberating the Igbo people. Her idea of a state is based on ethnicity, rather than self-identity.[12] The imagined future, though, is never realised.

Kainene does not think that she is risking her life when she goes to *afia attack*. Yet by going to "trade across enemy lines and by crossing the border" she defies the boundaries set by the war and assumes the risk of death. Before the end of the war is announced, she is lost. It is as if her disappearance is preparation for the reunification of Nigeria. Kainene as an Igbo woman, who could be considered a war heroine, is problematic for unified nation-state identity. Gendered representations are a crucial factor in the nation-state narrative. Kainene falls on the "wrong" side of both these criteria. Andrade asserts, "Nationalism or national politics takes precedence over or usurps women's subjectivity" (30). While Kainene is particularly valuable running the refugee camp, upon unification, she disappears from the narrative. The fact that Kainene acts decisively in favour of the Republic of Biafra makes her a liability for a unified narrative of Nigeria.

She trades with the enemy (Nigeria) to survive and thus her loyalty (to Biafra) is also under question. The fact that she traded as a matter of survival is beside the point. Why exclude her contribution and diminish the role she played? And what are the implications thereof? The exclusion could be read as the neatening of a messy historical narrative. Andrade notes "that leaving the site of nationalist orthodoxy and focus has some bearing on the author's ability to withstand its silencing powers" (31). With this reading, I suggest that Kainene has to exit the text in order to "survive"; her disappearance rather than recorded death allows a moment of hope. Perhaps at a different time, Kainene can return and be fully accommodated in the narrative. Hopefully, there will also be room for Amala and Chiamaka.

The legacy beyond *afia attack*

Kainene disappears and does not see the destruction of the Biafra dream. Yet, she is searched for and recalled in the final pages of the novel. The characters, particularly Richard and Olanna, lose a sense of purpose with her disappearance. Ugwu's character uses her absence and produces a narrative that may or may not reflect her dynamic influence. Still, I read her disappearance across enemy lines more as an absorption into the consciousness of a unified Nigeria rather than a total elimination. Ultimately, if Nigeria is considered Biafra's enemy

[12] Based on the premises of the secession could Biafran identity be separated from Igbo identity?

and Nigeria considers Biafra part of Nigeria, Kainene's disappearance is complicated. She cannot be lost to the enemy within her own country. Nair (213) claims,

> Adichie concludes her novel with the physical disappearance of Kainene. What happened to her remains a mystery both to the reader and the other characters. Through Kainene's fate, Adichie seems to suggest the bleak and ambiguous prospects for any future nation-state.

However, Hodges (11) contends that,

> [Kainene] has unexpectantly (sic) become… the strength that holds everyone together, so her disappearance, which remains unexplained at the end of the book, makes a more fitting metaphor for what's lost at war's end than her death would have been… her absence remains irresolvable.

I argue that Hodge misreads Kainene's disappearance. Coffey (63) offers a different reading where Kainene's disappearance "refuses closure" and since "[t]he novel confirms neither Kainene's death nor a total Biafra failure, [it] enabl[es] the potential for the return of either" (77). While I concur with the first part of Coffey's statement, I would qualify that the "potential for the return" may not be as explicit as Kainene returning home. I am more inclined to see her disappearance as allowing the different characters to reposition themselves and occupy the vacuum Kainene has left, within their societal roles. As Coffey (77) states, "The novel must, of course, come to a close, but Kainene's 'absence' – not her death, not her known fate, but her 'absence' – continues to haunt," which is a sentiment shared by Amy Novak (46). Kainene's haunting is not something to be fearful of, it is more gentle, more suggestive, much more defiant and hopeful than a neat ending.

In addition, I need to note that Ugwu and Odenigbo both disappear during the war. Ugwu's return is decidedly dramatic. He is believed to be dead and it is Kainene who delivers this news. Richard counters that narrative which presents an equally curious reading. He is the one who gives Ugwu the title for the Biafra story. Regarding the disappearances Coffey notes,

> Odenigbo and Ugwu each 'disappear' from refugee camps into the heat of the conflict. In each case, neither the other characters nor the reader know what has befallen the missing individual, but each eventually returns to the camp from which he disappeared… These two survived disappearances might well serve as textual precedents, suggesting Kainene's eventual return as well. (76-77)

Yet, I think Coffey misses one important point: Kainene is a transgressive woman and the nuances that have to be negotiated around her return to the narrative is not neat. I propose that Kainene disappears because her African womanhood cannot be contained in the narrative. Her disappearance serves as an important commentary on the "type" of African woman that can survive the war. As Boehmer notes, "[Kainene] disappears and is not heard of again despite multiple attempts to locate her" (407, 413, 433). Instead, Kainene "returns" through the consciousness of the protagonists.

In an attempt to respond to Azuike's question at the start of the chapter, the abrupt ending could be a way to clear the path for a unified Nigeria to emerge, as well as a form of silencing that permits Ugwu to write his version of the Biafra War. Kainene's character does not allow Ugwu to be the hero in a narrative where he enacts violence against a defenseless woman. She would be the one who petitions and asks that he pays for the crimes he committed during the war. Perhaps by burning his manuscript.

Ultimately, we need to be honest about the way Kainene would have had to answer for her war efforts. The novel ends with deadly consequences for those who were involved with the secession movement. Entire military units are executed. One could easily imagine that the fate for a woman conspirator would be rape and then death. Thus, Kainene's abrupt disappearance has a number of possibilities and are all linked to the way she enacts citizenship during a time of war.

Outlines and shadows: Locating Kainene within the official narrative

Opondo and Shapiro state, "maps are… pregnant with possibility" (2), a sentiment I share. We have covered the social and political ways in which Kainene has traversed different boundaries and borders. Yet, Opondo and Shapiro make a further suggestion:

> [Maps] are a crowded plan(e) characterized by multiple ideas and affects that bring forth the intensive capacities and extensive relations of bodies, movements and dispositions that exceed entrenched representational codes. To the extent that maps partition and distribute static social space, institutionalized or power-invested cartographic practices present regulative ideals predicated on notions of the 'right' relationships between bodies, spaces and times. They also 'police' and reproduce regimes for the 'distribution of bodies into functions' and determine what bodies are recognizable and what they can and cannot do within the spaces and times they occupy. (101, citing Rancière)

These "entrenched representational codes" are what this thesis insists on challenging and opposing in terms of the official narrative and the representation of African womanhood. The disappearance of Kainene is a way of "policing" which bodies occupy the official narrative; her representation of African womanhood is fraught within the text and does not lend itself to a neat conclusion. Her complexity and identity tensions are the factors that create a rich character but also a character that cannot exist in the space and time of the official narrative.

Opondo and Shapiro posit "[a]s Deleuze's critical diagrammatics inaugurates new ways of thinking… it becomes apparent that cartography is much more than spatializing practice" (2). The national liberation geographies also represent hierarchies of power, and Kainene's disappearance beyond enemy lines suggests that the enemy has the power. They are able to erase a dynamic representation of African womanhood. Reading Deleuze, Opondo and Shapiro suggests this

> provocation encourages alternative insights into the way new cartographies recompose bodies by affecting and agitating them in new ways, evoking the capacity of bodies to disturb mapped spaces through acts of disidentification, deformation and encounter. (2)

It is clear that Kainene does not identify with the enemy but is willing to engage the enemy to make gains. In fact, she initially profits from the war and that is significant. She is able to trade off suffering, which is not a representation of African womanhood that would be readily accepted within the official narrative. Opondo and Shapiro state:

> Much of the value of critical analyses of cartography lies in the ways in which they disrupt institutionalized geopolitical mappings by displacing what are regarded as stable worlds, substituting them with historically contingent ones. (1)

The mapping of Kainene's existence at the start of this thesis is essential to show the ways she transgresses different roles within the novel. It also allows for a discussion around what makes a citizen and how national identity is constructed. It brings into question what status possible offspring of Kainene and Richard would have within a unified Nigeria. All these pieces are telling in terms of how personhood within nation-state boundaries is mapped.

When one states that Kainene has been lost beyond enemy lines, one is saying that she disappears in Northern Nigeria. This is a curious point as she disappears just before the war ends. Once Nigeria becomes unified, in theory, the enemy line should no longer exist. Yet it continues to exist within the narrative geography and the social imagination. While the political changes create a cartographic unit, the divided social geographic narratives remain intact until to the novel's end. The political dissolving of enemy lines does not translate into social cohesion. If we are speaking about the violence of cartography, the enforcement of a unified Nigeria is an act of violence towards the Republic of Biafra and the Igbo people. In fact, Coffey (64) presents an interesting reading of the twins and the warring states:

> The relationship between the sisters Olanna and Kainene aligns with the relationship between (Northern) Nigeria and Eastern Nigeria, the latter known as the Republic of Biafra between 1967 and 1970. In the way that Kainene grows emotionally distant from Olanna, eventually stops speaking to her, and suddenly disappears, so Eastern Nigeria increasingly clashed with Northern Nigeria during the early 1960s, seceded as the Republic of Biafra in 1967, and eventually "disappeared" at the end of the war in 1970, as it was absorbed back into Nigeria. I will further argue, however, that the 'disappearances' of Kainene and Biafra are not necessarily final.

This passage offers an insightful reading of the importance of Kainene's geopolitical positioning within the novel. It provides a way to understand the allegorical significance of her disappearance against the unified Nigeria narrative. What happens after the novel closes is open-ended and this is foreshadowed when Kainene explains the meaning of her name: *Let's watch and see what next God will bring* (59, italics in original). Coffey (75) further

states, “Kainene, the twin who had for so long sought independence from the other, has disappeared almost precisely at the moment at which Biafra and its borders dissipate”.

This argument aligns with the sentiment that Kainene is absorbed within the national consciousness rather than being removed entirely. She lives on in different ways and this is evidenced by the way the protagonists evoke her memory. At this point, I would like to briefly explore the impact Kainene has on Chiamaka.

Chiamaka is a remarkable character. Her mothering figures are distinct. Amala, her biological mother, abandons her without ever touching her. She is the rejected granddaughter of the village grandmother. She is the symbol of Odenigbo’s betrayal and the embodiment of the clash between tradition and modernity. She is informally adopted by Olanna who has no desire to have children. Her adoption is confirmed because Kainene approves of the decision. She is nurtured by Ugwu, a village boy. At first, Olanna says, “We’ll call her Baby for now until we find the perfect name. Kainene suggested Chiamaka. I’ve always loved that name: God is beautiful. Kainene will be her godmother” (254). Yet as Baby gets older she is never called Chiamaka. Kainene does not understand why she has not been formally named, “it’s about time the girl began to be called Chiamaka. This Baby business is tiresome” (344). Yet by the end of the novel, Baby’s name is never discussed or decided on. It is assumed that her name will be Chiamaka, a name only Kainene uses. It could be argued that in this act of naming Kainene grants Chiamaka her individuality instead of a generic identity. It is also Kainene that counters Olanna’s overprotective mothering,

> Kainene gave Baby a can to store the shrapnel. Kainene asked Baby to join the older children making lizard traps, to learn how to mat the palm fronds and place the cocoon full of *iddo* ants inside. Kainene let Baby hold the dagger of the emaciated man who paraded the compound… Kainene let Baby eat a lizard leg… ‘Chiamaka should see life as it is, *ejima m*,’ Kainene said, as they moisturised their faces. ‘You protect her too much from life.’ (388)

The irony of this passage cannot be overlooked. As the war progresses Olanna and Kainene are applying expensive moisturiser. However, Kainene is able to occupy her reality in full so she allows Chiamaka to explore realities of life in war. Towards the end of the novel Chiamaka tells Ugwu that she can bath herself. He wonders how much longer before she

won't need him at all. The reader may wonder how much longer before she insists on being called Chiamaka or another name of her choice.

In closing, this chapter has shown the ways Kainene's character transgresses gendered and social conventions even as she embodies engaged citizenship. Her influence on the protagonists were outlined: Olanna channels Kainene's confidence, Richard reflects the inevitable human cost of the war and Ugwu authors the Biafra narrative. Chiamaka remains a poignant mix of potentialities and possibilities. Kainene's disappearance, while unexpected, presents the opportunity for reappearance in non-traditional ways. It allows for alternative narratives to emerge and be established – perhaps even fully-fledged narratives that complement and supplement a singular narrative.

Conclusion: When endings spawn new beginnings

> Far from being simply a nation-building technology, literature… complicates and restores complexity to the notions of national and gendered collectivity. Its ability to do so stems often from its self-conscious reflexivity, its potential to dramatise, rather than conceal, contradictions, and, as a rhetorical medium, its ability to rework and dis-figure the representations of women from which nationalist identity, belonging and unity is produced.
> – Samuelson 241

> The written word works against official narratives, challenging state authority and official images of benevolence.
> – Hunt 249

> [F]iction… shapes a counterdiscourse.
> – Marx 599

It is peculiar to conclude a thesis about open endings. Equally, the nature of literary projects means that every reading and rereading of the primary texts alongside critical scholarship produces ever more questions and enquiries. The line has to be drawn, but need not be in absolutes. This thesis does not neatly tie up loose ends or smooth out tensions. Instead, I attempt to hold the numerous potentialities and possibilities that the readings have offered before circling back to where this enquiry began. Theoretically, African Feminism is at the core of this thesis. It does not work to provide tidy resolutions or absolute positions. Rather it interrogates assumptions and presents a multitude of readings.

This thesis focuses on how non-focalising, transgressive woman characters set the path for an alternative citizenry that reflects contested boundaries and embodies multifaceted identities. From the start of each novel we are aware that Misra and Kainene are strong yet problematic characters within their respective communities. The thesis works through the characteristics that make them dissident within their respective communities and explores why they are written out of the narrative. The leading question remains: what does Misra and Kainene's presence complicate/upset/indicate in the narrative that requires them to be written out of it?

This question has been worked through methodically throughout the two chapters. The chapters are different in their reach and essence. The respective books demand this of the enquiry. Misra and Kainene are made possible because of the dynamics within their respective communities as much as they transgress their norms. I propose that they are both representations of their communities and of nuanced African womanhood. Fiction can envision futures that have yet to come to fruition. Thus, the idea of Misra as a Somali citizen lays the groundwork for the Somali citizenry to be redefined. In the same way, Kainene presents ways to be fully Igbo within Nigeria. Furthermore, Misra transgresses gender, ethnic and political boundaries through her choice of association and allegiances. Kainene does the same through her enactment of her Biafra citizenship.

In times of uncertain and unstable identities, Misra and Kainene are both clear on what is necessary for their communities (and themselves) to survive even if the options are not favourable. As a result, they both disappear from the narrative as refugees. While we have a sense of their elimination from the narrative, no clear answers are given. In their respective ways the novels theorise gender and nation. They also question gender within the construct of nation. The texts demonstrate complex narratives and I have deliberately kept the theory in the background. Equally, the debates this thesis engages with, particularly in terms of defining the citizen, are longstanding and contested much like the spaces of conflict in the novels. As stated in the introduction, this thesis aims to add to the body of scholarship on Misra and Kainene.

At this point, it helps to consider the ways women enact citizenship. Anthias and Yuval-Davis (7) argue that there are five ways in which women "participate in ethnic and national processes and in relation to state practices". Four of these apply to both Misra and Kainene (which is significant in its own right): The first is as a "reproducer of the boundaries of ethnic/national groups". The second is as a participant "in the ideological reproduction of the collectivity" and a "transmitter of its culture". Third is as a signifier "of ethnic/national differences. And finally, as a participant "in national, economic, political and military struggles" (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 7). These criteria are evident in the ways Misra and Kainene deal with their communities and their responsibilities within their communities. In thinking through the citizenship evoked by Misra and Kainene, Werbner and Yuval-Davis's definition seems most apt,

> As an unstable political and jural formation, citizenship both compounds and confounds contradictory tendencies: of universalism and particularism, freedom and order, individual rights and collective responsibilities, identity and difference, nation and individual. (2)

At this stage it ought to be clear that citizenship is a contradictory position. Identity and difference play vital roles in forming the citizen. They are markers that create the boundaries of citizenship. Similarly, the individual has to act in favour of the nation, but not recklessly, so that order is disrupted. Misra's milk trade and the consequences thereof is a poignant example. Each action and characteristic can be checked against these criteria and it will become evident that citizenship is messy. Yet, citizenship is still enacted with all its contradictions. The way the novels embrace this messiness is hopeful.

The quotes that open this chapter encapsulate what I envision fiction to do: to create counter discourses that challenge the official narrative and hold contradictions rather than flatten them. Misra and Kainene, even as non-focalising characters, are full-bodied, nuanced and compelling, deserving of their own narrative. The reader is aware of their presence and impact on the narrative. Neither Farah nor Adichie offer neat conclusions for either character (or novel); in fact, the characters complicate and present open endings. As Garuba makes clear, borders and boundaries are always transgressed, in ways that maps are not (112).

Nonetheless, mapping, as theorised by Garuba, works in provocative ways. In *Maps*, rather than erase or overwrite Misra and her story within a space that does not necessarily welcome her, Askar inscribes her memory and reiterates it. In his own way, Askar maps her presence and significance. It seems to be a way to rectify the omission on his identity document. Comparably, Kainene disappears but Olanna reclaims her presence as she evokes her as her sister in their next lifetime. In this instance, Olanna looks beyond the physical realm, crossing a boundary she initially discounts.

Further to the matter of spaces and borders, in *Maps* and *Yellow Sun* space and borders not only impact identity and citizenship but enable physical violence. That is to say, while Misra is mistreated within the Kallafo community throughout her time there, the Ogaden War between Somalia and Ethiopia makes the arrangement of her rape and the complacency around it permissible. In Kainene's instance, when she chooses to cross enemy lines, she

disappears. This is a risk she assumes that would not be an issue in different times. Both Misra and Kainene occupy contested territory and cross borders to survive; neither make it back "home".

In the sections that follow I work through the tensions in the two chapters and draw this thesis to a reluctant close.

Mapping Misra

Maps is like a collection of stories that Askar tells about Misra. The texture of Misra's origin story and history proposes a community member with a deep understanding and compassion for humanity. We see this in the way she nurtures Askar despite knowing that he will one day reject her.

The chapter on *Maps* demonstrates, through Hilaal's discourse, that Somali identity is not fixed but a construct. It moves through important moments in Misra's life and picks up the ways she transgresses gender, social, ethnic and political boundaries. It highlights the ways she fulfils community responsibilities despite being ostracised and abused. Furthermore, it outlines her journey from the Ogaden area to the capital and ultimately, her death. It concludes with the suggestion that Misra represents a Somali citizenship that accommodates the contested space and community of the Ogaden area. But there is more to this argument.

The key point to discuss in full is her murder. Farah suggests that fiction can "alter the unjust narrative" (Romm) yet Misra's character is given a death sentence without trial. Her foreignness is the evidence used to convict and sentence her. This, of course, includes the sexual violence she endures throughout the narrative. Unlike Kainene's character, Misra is a victim of her circumstance, she endures extreme hardship throughout her life which never truly lessens. Her outright murder seems pointedly harsh. Misra is not merely murdered. She is ritually murdered and her corpse thrown into the ocean. She is dismembered and dramatically exiled from Somali territory. However, her corpse washes onto shore and she is buried on Somali soil, in the capital.

There is a point where Askar tells Misra that he needs to kill her in order for them to be one (38). Earlier in the novel, it is suggested that Askar has "the fortune of holding simultaneously multiple citizenships of different kingdoms" (11). If they are one after her

murder, then Misra inhabits the different universes Askar is able to occupy. We see this manifested in the fact that she is buried in Somali's capital which would not have been possible if Hilaal and Salaado had not claimed her as their own; something they do twice, once when she is alive and then again when she is dead.

Relatedly, it is presumed that her body, thrown into the ocean, would never be found and identified. Except, her corpse washes up on shore. While still in Kallafo, she tells Askar, "Rivers have memories. They remember where they're come from, they have allegiance to the people in whose country they rise" (37). Symbolically, this can be read as the rivers of Somalia guiding her corpse back to the mainland: even if those with a strict definition of a Somali citizen reject Misra, the elements recognise her as their own. Her burial in the capital then suggests that she has a place within Somalia even if this is not recognised within her lifetime. Askar acknowledges Misra. Whether Ugwu acknowledges Kainene in the same way(s) we do not know, but the former have a familial allegiance.

Misra dies with the understanding that Askar's people are her people (193). She even includes that her ex-husband's people are her people (93). What is telling about this is that it is highly likely that one of Askar's uncles is Misra's ex-husband. This would imply that she is Somali through two men, and if one includes Hilaal, her guardian, then that total becomes three. This would have qualified her to apply for Somali identity. An improbable proposition Hilaal makes at one point.

One of Misra's strongest traits is her ability to speak Somali and Amharic, enabling her to communicate with the different communities that eventually make up the Ogaden, and thus she can move between worlds. The fact that she has an Ethiopian name and a Somali variation thereof is equally useful. Her name is a point of intrigue. She enters the capital under a name we never learn of. In the closing page of *Maps*, Askar evokes all of Misra's known identities to tell the story of her life. This is a powerful testament to the way she then enters the consciousness of the people he repeats the story to. She comprises all her transgressive and dissident characteristics.

Beyond enemy lines: Reclaiming Kainene

In the chapter on *Half of a Yellow Sun*, I propose, on a practical level, that Kainene cannot safely exist within Nigeria post-Biafra War. Her actions implicate her in acts of treason. In

addition, her transgression of gender boundaries challenges social conventions. Yet it is the way in which Kainene is able to move from a business woman to a war profiteer to a refugee camp food supplier that makes her a valuable citizen. The manner in which she throws her weight and skills behind establishing the Republic of Biafra is rousing.

The impact Kainene – and her disappearance – has on the protagonists lies at the heart of the chapter: Olanna is more assertive. Richard is lost within Nigeria. Ugwu authors *The World Was Silent When We Died* and carries the weight of his participation in raping the girl in the bar. This suggests that her legacy of citizenship does not end with her disappearance.

One loose end in the second chapter is the suggestion that if Kainene learned that Ugwu raped the girl in the bar she would burn his manuscript as punishment. Where would this leave the narrative of the Biafra War? Who would then be left to write the story? Would the burning of the manuscript atone for the crime? Or would Kainene leave the manuscript be and move for Ugwu to be charged with war crimes? What then would happen between Kainene and Olanna? Or become of Kainene and Baby/Chiamaka's relationship? Would Odenigbo and Richard oppose such a move? This suggestion shows that even though Kainene and Ugwu have limited interaction, theirs is an understudied relationship. Finally, the idea of punishing Ugwu for his actions would also have implications for Kainene. However unfair it may seem, both Kainene and Ugwu would have to answer for their actions during the war. The reader would then have to ask themselves if they were willing to implicate Kainene in war crimes alongside Ugwu. This is a difficult choice as all "crimes" are not equal.

Remaining on the idea of Ugwu's book one is inclined to ask whether Ugwu has repeated Richard's mistake by withholding the truth of his participation in raping the girl in the bar to preserve the peace; which is a dishonest peace. What are the implications of this action and how does it shape the narrative of the Biafra War? Who will write the story of the girl in the bar and the many women who were sexually violated and abused throughout the Biafra War? What type of citizen would it make Ugwu if he withheld the crime? These are questions that cannot be answered here, but are important because they bring to fore the legacy of Kainene's brand of citizenship.

Coffey (71) suggests Kainene's disappearance is a threat rather than a tragedy, but who this is a threat to remains unclear. Is it Nigeria, or is it individuals like Ugwu? One has to wonder how Kainene would respond to Nigeria post-Biafra War because as an Igbo woman she presents a dual problem. Her disappearance means that we cannot know this answer, and perhaps, that is the point.

Two final points on Kainene's character. The first is that she fuses masculine and feminine traits in such a way that conventional gendered notions seem nonsensical. She does not simply transgress gender boundaries but makes them obsolete. The second point is based on her appearance. Kainene, at first glance, is considered either the mistress of a politician or a prostitute and therein lies her transgression. It is precisely her physicality, in all its "unAfricanness", that reflects her transgressive character.

Reluctant parting words

A simple response to why Misra and Kainene are written out of the narratives could be while the authors use fiction to create alternative worlds, the reality of their texts do not (yet) permit it. In fact, both novels preface an incomplete narrative. Askar tells Misra he will kill her. The title *Half of a Yellow Sun* signifies a movement that will not see fruition. The dynamic between the novels are rich. A lovely detail in *Maps* is when Hilaal (156) speaks about the Igbo people's attempt at establishing the Republic of Biafra. Misra and Kainene through close analysis appear to be parallel to each other without losing the context of their respective situations. Since the novels are written twenty years apart, I am inclined to think that Amala is the reincarnation of Misra whereas Chiamaka will embody Kainene's supreme confidence.

The short answer to how transgression and dissidence are represented in contested spaces? The transgression and dissidence appear as knowable forms. Misra is Askar's guardian but also the Ethiopian, Amharic-speaking community member of Kallafo. Kainene is the daughter of wealthy parents and the partner of a white, British man but also the astute business woman, war profiteer and refugee camp food supplier. They have always appeared as knowable forms but have been marginalised. This thesis made these characters the primary focus while highlighting their transgressions and dissidence. In the novels, these traits are what causes them to be written out of the narrative.

In closing, I see both novels as creating a world for transgressive characters even while they are not (yet) focalised. These characters, who are at odds with their communities, work towards survival of those communities during the war. Misra and Kainene do the work that the rest of the community cannot or will not do. Their transgressions and dissidence lead the way for new forms and shape of citizenship to emerge.

Bibliography

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *Half of a Yellow Sun*. London: Harper Perennial, 2006. Print.

Akpome, Aghogho. "Focalisation and Polyvocality in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*." *English Studies in Africa* 56.2 (2013): 25-35. Web.

Anderson, Benedict. "Introduction." *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* New York: Verso, 1983. 1-7. Print.

Andrade, Susan Z. *The Nation Writ Small: African Fictions and Feminisms, 1958-1988.* London: Duke University Press, 2011. Print.

Anthias, Floya, and Nira Yuval-Davis, eds. "Introduction." *Woman-Nation-State.* London: The MacMillan Press Ltd, 1989. 1-15. Print.

Appiah, Kwame A. Nuruddin Farah. *BOMB: The Author Interviews*. New York: BOMB Magazine, 2014. 163-176. Print.

Azuike, Maureen A. "Women's Struggles and Independence in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun.*" *African Research Review* 3.4 (2009): 79-91. Web.

Bardolph, Jacqueline. "Dreams and Identity in the Novels of Nuruddin Farah." *Research in African Literatures* 29.1 (1998): 163-173. Web.

Boehmer, Elleke. "Achebe and His Influence in Some Contemporary African Writing." *Interventions* 11.2 (2009): 141-153. Print.

Brown, Michelle L. "Bleeding for the Mother (Land): Reading Testimonial Bodies in Nuruddin Farah's *Maps*." *Research in African Literatures* 41.4 (2010): 125-143. Web.

Chatterjee, Partha. "Whose Imagined Community?" *The Nation and Its Fragments; Colonial and Postcolonial Histories.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993. 3-13. Print.

Cobham, Rhonda. "Boundaries of the Nation: Boundaries of the Self: African Nationalist Fictions and Nuruddin Farah's *Maps*." *Research in African Literatures* 22.2 (1991): 83-98. Web.

Coffey, Meredith. '"She Is Waiting': Political Allegory and the Specter of Secession in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*." *Research in African Literatures* 45.2 (2014): 63-85. Web.

Darie, Daniela-Irina. "African Womanhood and the Trauma of Self-Assertion." *Identities in Metamorphosis: Literature, Discourse and Multicultural Dialogue*. Ed. Iulian Boldea. Tîrgu Mures: Archipelag XXI Press, 2014. 1056-1065. Web.

Dietche, Julie P. "'Alas, no answer'? Structure as Theme in Nuruddin Farah's *Maps*." *Emerging Perspectives on Nuruddin Farah*. Ed. Derek Wright. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2002. 545-558. Print.

Doherty, Brian. "Writing Back with a Difference: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's 'The Headstrong Historian' as a Response to Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*." *Matatu* 45 (2014): 187-201. Web.

Farah, Nuruddin. *Maps*. London: Penguin Books, 1999. Print.

Garuba, Harry. "Mapping the Land/Body/Subject: Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies in African Narrative." *AlterNation* 9.1 (2002): 87-116. Web.

Gikandi, Simon. "The Politics and Poetics of National Formation: Recent African Writing and Maps." *Emerging Perspectives on Nuruddin Farah*. Ed. Derek Wright. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2002. Print.

Hanif, Samia. *Vision of the Post Colonial World in New Nigerian Fiction: A Literary Analysis of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Sefi Atta, Helon Habila and Chris Abani's Selected Works*. Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2012. Print.

Hodges, Hugh. "Writing Biafra: Adichie, Emecheta and the Dilemmas of Biafran War Fiction." *Postcolonial Text* 5.1 (2009): 1-13. Print.

Huggan, Graham. "Decolonizing the Map: Postcolonialism, Poststructuralism and the Cartographic Connection." *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature* 20.4 (1989): 115-131. Web.

Hunt, Stacey. "Writing cartographies of violence: nation building through state failure". *New Political Science* 35.2 (2013): 227-249. Print.

Ikediugwu, Ogechukwu A. "Feminist Inclinations in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Purple Hibiscus*." *New Academia* 2.4 (2013): 1-16. Print.

Kazan, Francesca. “Recalling the Other Third World: Nuruddin Farah’s *Maps*.” *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 26.3 (1993): 253-267. Web.

Kelley, Hilarie. “A Somali Tragedy of Political and Sexual Confusion: A Critical Analysis of Nuruddin Farah’s *Maps*.” *Ufahamu: A Journal of African St*udies 16.2 (1988): 21-37. Web.

Lewis, Desiree. “African Feminisms.” *Agenda* 16.50 (2003): 4-10. Print.

Marx, John. “Failed-State Fiction.” *Contemporary Literature* 49.4 (2008): 597-633. Print.

Moolla, F. Fiona. “Dissolving the Boundaries of Self & Nation in *Maps* & *Secrets*.” *Reading Nuruddin Farah: the Individual, the Novel and the Idea of Home*. Woodbridge, Suffolk: James Currey, 2014. 142-154. Print.

Moore, Gerald. “Maps and Mirrors.” *Emerging Perspectives on Nuruddin Farah*. Ed. Derek Wright. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2002. 509-520. Print.

Nair, Chitra T. “Negotiation of Socio-Ethnic Spaces: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun* as a Testimonio of African National and Ethnic Identity.” *Matatu* 45 (2014): 203-215. Web.

Ngaboh-Smart, Francis. “Nationalism and the Aporia of National Identity in Farah’s *Maps*.” *Research in African Literatures* 32.3 (2001): 86-102. Print.

Novak, Amy. “Who Speaks? Who Listens?: The Problem Of Address in Two Nigerian Trauma Novels.” *Studies in the Novel* 40.1&2 (2008): 31-51. Web.

Obi, E. I., and B. D. Okunrobo. “Language, Gender and War Situation: ‘Her/story’ in Nwapa’s and Adichie’s Stories, the Complement of ‘His/tory’.” *AFRREV LALIGENS* 4.1 (2015): 88-101. Web.

Opondo, Samson, and Michael J. Shapiro, eds. “Introduction” *The New Violent Cartography: Geo-Analysis after the Aesthetic Turn.* New York: Routledge, 2012. 1-11. Print.

Ouma, Christopher. “Chronotopicity in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*.” *The New Violent Cartography: Geo-Analysis after the Aesthetic Turn*. Eds. Samson Opondo & Michael J. Shapiro. New York: Routledge, 2012. 33-48. Print.

Romm, James. “Free Radical: Nuruddin Farah.” *The Fabulist*. n.d. Web.

Ruggiero, Rosanna. “Nuruddin Farah *Maps*: The Faint Borderland of a Warrior of Words.” *Emerging Perspectives on Nuruddin Farah*. Ed. Derek Wright. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2002. 559-566. Print.

Samuelson, Meg. *Remembering the Nation, Dismembering Women? Stories of the South African Transition*. Scotsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2007. Print.

The Combahee River Collective. “A Black Feminist Statement.” *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. 3rd ed. Eds. Carole McCannand Seung-kyung Kim.2017. New York; London: Routledge, 1977. Print.

Tunca, Daria, ed. “Introduction.” *Stylistic approaches to Nigerian Fiction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. 1- 5. Web.

———. “‘The Other Half of a Sun’: Ideology in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun*.” *Stylistic Approaches to Nigerian Fiction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. 64-99. Web.

Uwakweh, Pauline. “(Re)Constructing Masculinity and Femininity in African War Narratives: The Youth in Chimamanda Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun* and Gorretti Kyomuhendo’s *Waiting: A Novel of Uganda at War*.” *JALA* 7.1 (2012): 82-106. Web.

Werbner, Pnina, and Yuval-Davis, Nira., eds. “Introduction: Women and the New Discourse of Citizenship.” *Women, Citizenship and Difference*. London: Zed Books, 1999. 1-38. Print.

West-Pavlov, Russell. “Maps and the geography of violence: Farah’s *Maps* and Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*.” *The new violent cartography: geo-analysis after the aesthetic turn.* Eds. Samson Opondo and Michael J. Shapiro. New York: Routledge, 2012. 15-32. Print.

Wilson-Tagoe, Nana. “The African novel and the feminine condition.” *The Cambridge Companion to the African Novel.* Ed. F. Abiola Irele. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 177- 193. Print.

Wright, Derek. “Guardians and Wards: *Maps.*”. *The novels of Nuruddin Farah*. Bayreuth, Germany: Breitinger, 1994. 105-127. Print.

———. “Parenting The Nation: Some Observations On Nuruddin Farah’s *Maps*.” *College Literature* 19.3 (1992): 176-184. Web.

Yewah, Emmanuel. “The Nation as a Contested Construct.” *Research in African Literatures* 32.2 (2001): 45-56. Print.

Background reading

Akpome, Aghogho. ‘“Dancing Masquerades’: Narrating Postcolonial Personhood in Three Novels”. *English in Africa* 40.1 (2013): 139-159. Print.

Akpome, Aghogho. “Narrating a New Nationalism: Rehistoricization and Political Apologia in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun*.” *English Academy Review* 30.1 (2013): 22-38. Web.

Ålund, Aleksandra. “Feminism, Multicultural, Essentialism.” *Women, Citizenship and Difference*. Eds. Nira Yuval-Davis and Pnina Werbner. London: Zed Books, 1999. 147-161. Print.

Andrade, Susan Z. “Adichie’s Genealogies: National and Feminine Novels.” *Research in African Literatures* 42.2 (2011): 91-101. Web.

Armstrong, Nancy and Leonard Tennenhouse, eds. “Introduction.” *The Violence of Representation: Literature and the History of Violence*. London: Routledge, 1989. 1-27. Print.

Basu, A. “Transnational Feminism Revisited.” *Feminist Africa* 5 (2005): 90-94. Web.

Boehmer, Elleke. “Transfiguring: Colonial body into postcolonial narrative.” *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 26.3 (1993): 268-277.

Bernard Dickson, C. and Kinggeorge Okoro Preye. “History, Memory and the Politics of National Unity in Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun* and Achebe’s *There was a Country*.” *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature* 2.5 (2014): 81-89.

Colmer, R. “This is a Pen: Writing in *Maps*.” In *Emerging Perspectives on Nuruddin Farah*. Ed. Derek Wright. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2002. 495-508. Print.

Cooper, Brenda. “An Abnormal Ordinary: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s ‘Half of a Yellow Sun’”. *A New Generation of African Writers: Migration, Material Culture and Language*. Scottsville: James Currey and University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008. 133-150. Print.

Coulibaly, Aboubacar Sidiki. “Theorizing and categorizing African Feminism within the context of the African Female Novel.” *Recherches africaines* 15 (2015): 1-23. Web.

Dalley, Hamish. “Aesthetics of Absent Causality: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun*.” *The Postcolonial Historical Novel: Realism, Allegory, and the Representation of Contested Pasts*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. 121-146. Web.

Driver, Dorothy. “Unruly Subjects in Southern African Fiction: Writing and Regeneration in the Fiction of Bessie Head, Zoe Wicomb, Tsitsi Dangarembga and Yvonne Vera.” *CRNLE* (2001): 65-93. Web.

Dubey, M. “The ‘True Lie’ of the Nation: Fanon and Feminism.” *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 10.2 (1998): 1-29. Web.

Goodman, S. and Graham Matthews. “Introduction: Violence and the Limits of Representations.” *Violence and the Limits of Representation*. Eds. Graham Matthews and Sam Goodman. Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan Publishers Ltd, 2013. 1-11.

Hungwe, C. “Putting them in their place: ‘respectable’ and ‘unrespectable’ women in Zimbabwean gender struggles.” *Feminist Africa* 6 (2006): 33-47. Web.

Irele, F. Abiola, ed. “Introduction: perspectives on the African novel.” *The Cambridge Companion to the African Novel.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 1- 14. Print.

Joseph, May. “Bodies outside the State.” *Nomadic Identities: The performance of citizenship*. Minnesota: University Of Minnesota Press, 1999. 111- 125. Print.

Juraga, Dubravka. “Nuruddin Farah’s Variations on the Theme of an African Dictatorship: Patriarchy, Gender, and Political Oppression in Somalia.” *Critiques* 38.3 (1997): 205-220. Web.

Lopez, Marta Sofia. “Creating Daughterlands: Dangarembga, Adichie, and Vera.” *JALA* 2.1 (2008): 83-97. Web.

McFadden, P. “Becoming postcolonial: African Women Changing the Meaning of Citizenship.” *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* 6.1 (2005): 1-22. Web.

Mekgwe, Pinkie. “Theorizing African Feminism(s): the ‘colonial’ question.” *Quest: An African Journal of Philosophy* XX: 11-22. Print.

Mikell, G. “African Feminism; Toward a New Politics of Representation.” *Feminist Studies* 21.2 (1995): 405-424. Web.

Moolla, F Fiona. “Defining the Individual: Conceptual & Historical Limits.” *Reading Nuruddin Farah: the individual, the novel and the idea of home*. Woodbridge, Suffolk: James Currey, 2014. 16-47. Print.

Moolla, F Fiona. “Introduction.” *Reading Nuruddin Farah: the individual, the novel and the idea of home*. Woodbridge, Suffolk: James Currey, 2014. 1-15. Print.

Ngaboh-Smart, F. “Secrets and a New Civic Consciousness.” *Research in African Literatures* 31.1 (2000): 129-136. Web.

Ntalindwa, Raymond. “Nationalism and the East African Writer: The Position of Nuruddin Farah.” *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies* 25.3 (1997): 67-85. Web.

Nnaemeka, Obioma. “From Orality to Writing: African Women Writers and the (re)inscription of womanhood.” *Research in African Literatures* 25.4 (1994): 137-157. Print.

Nnaemeka, Obioma. “Mapping African Feminisms.” *Readings in Gender in Africa*. Ed. Andrea Cornwall. London: The International African Institute, SOAS, 2005. 31-40. Web.

Nnaemeka, Obioma. “Negro-Feminism: Theorizing, Practicing and Pruning African’s Way.” *Signs* 29.2 (2004): 357-385. Web.

Oates, Nathan. “Political Stories: The Individual in Contemporary Fiction.” *Missouri Review* 30.3 (2007): 156-171. Web.

Ogwude, Sophia. “History and Ideology in Chimamanda Adichie’s fiction.” *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* 48.1 (2011): 110-123. Web.

Osunbade, Niyi. “Implicatures of Domestic Discourse in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*.” *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* 3.21 (2013): 82-94. Web.

Palmberg, Mai and Kirsten Holst Petersen. “Whose Biafra? Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*.” *Experiences of Freedom in Postcolonial Literatures and Cultures*. Eds. Annalisa Oboe & Shaul Bassi. New York: Routledge, 2011. 191-201. Web.

Rebello, Annabel. “Crisis of Individual, National and Collective Identity in Nuruddin Farah's *Maps*.” *Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal* 3 (2014): 4-6. Web.

Rideout, Jennifer. “Toward a New Nigerian Womanhood: Woman as Nation in *Half of a Yellow Sun*.” *Commonwealth Essays and Studies* 36.2 (2014): 71-81. Print.

Samatar, Ahmed. Interview with Nuruddin Farah. Bilhaan 1 (2008): 87-106. Print.

Satkunananthan, Anita Harris. “Textual Transgressions and Consuming the Self in the Fiction of Helen Oyeyemi and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.” *Hecate* 37.2 (2011): 41-69. Web.

Shapiro, Michael J. “The New Violent Cartography”. *Security Dialogue* 38.3 (2007): 291-313. Web.

Shapiro, Michael J. “A continuing violent cartography.” *The New Violent Cartography: Geo-Analysis after the Aesthetic Turn*. Eds. Samson Opondo & Michael J. Shapiro. New York: Routledge, 2012. 263-283. Print.

Simoes da Silva, Tony. “Embodied Genealogies and Gendered Violence in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s Writing.” *African Identities* 10.4 (2012): 455-470. Print.

Szuba, Monika. “Re-examining the Past, Renegotiating Identities: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun*.” *Empty Treasure Chests Dumped from Departed Ships: Re-Mapping (Post)Colonialism in Art and Literature in English*. Ed. Liliana Sikorska. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011. Print.

Thomas, Dominic. “New voices, emerging themes.” *The Cambridge Companion to the African Novel.* Ed. F. Abiola Irele. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 227-241. Print.

Wright, D. “Nations as Fictions: Postmodernism in the Novels of Nuruddin Farah.” *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction* 38.3 (1997): 193-204. Web.

Wright, Derek. “Oligarchy and orature in the novels of Nuruddin Farah.” *Studies in 20th and 21st Century Literature* 15.1 (1991): 87-99. Print.